

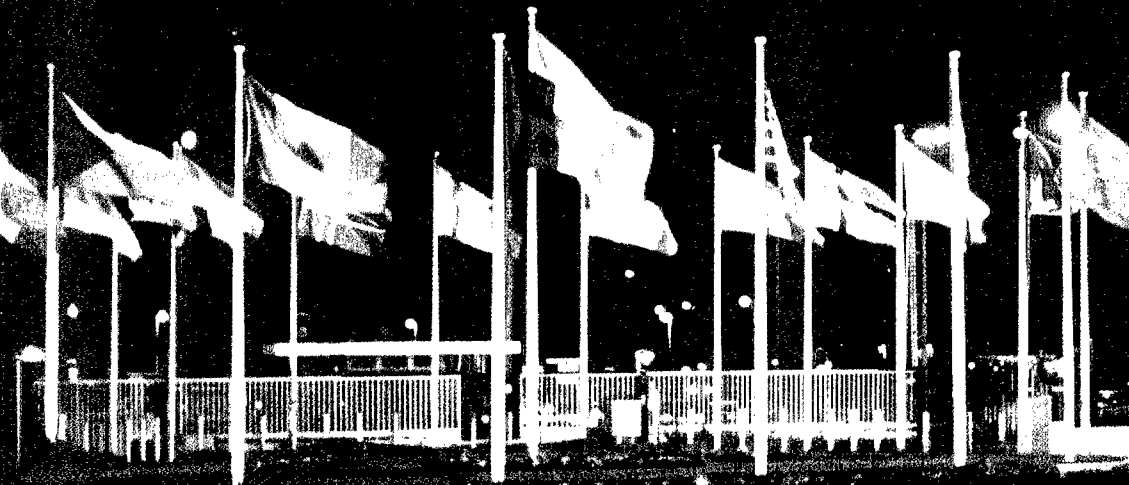
PROJECT AIR FORCE SERIES ON **OPERATION ALLIED FORCE**

# European Contributions to Operation Allied Force

Implications for Transatlantic Cooperation

JOHN E. PETERS • STUART JOHNSON

NORA BNSAHEL • TIMOTHY LISTON • TRACI WILLIAMS



Project AIR FORCE  
RAND

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## PREFACE

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Operation Allied Force, the 1999 NATO air campaign that sought to prevent a wider humanitarian disaster in Kosovo, has become the epicenter of controversy over European security and defense capabilities. It represents the triumph of air power to some observers, and highlights the limitations of air power for others. It represents a successful case of cooperative allied military action for proponents of NATO, and suggests the limits of U.S.-European military cooperation to the skeptics.

This report offers a dispassionate assessment of what Operation Allied Force really means in terms of future U.S.-European military action and future European military capabilities. It provides perspectives from both sides of the Atlantic, offering the lessons learned and implications from Allied Force as they might appear in Brussels, Paris, London, and Berlin as well as in Washington. The report also provides perspectives appropriate to various levels of involvement in the operation: the political, general military, and all air force-specific implications.

This study was conducted as part of the Strategy and Doctrine program of Project AIR FORCE, and was sponsored by the U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE). It should be of interest to the U.S. and European partners in NATO as well as the U.S. Air Force.

Other documents published in this series currently include the following:

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- Lessons Learned from Operation Allied Force Tanker Operations

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## SUMMARY

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On March 24, 1999, NATO initiated the second major offensive military campaign in its fifty-year history.<sup>1</sup> Operation Allied Force was initially designed to last only a few days, long enough to convince Slobodan Milosevic to stop the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and to pull his forces out of the disputed province. Instead of immediately complying with NATO's demands, Milosevic chose to escalate the violence against the Kosovar Albanians, perhaps hoping that the Alliance's consensus for action would shatter after a few days of bombing. The allies did disagree about many aspects of the operation, ranging from target selection to altitude restrictions and the possible use of ground troops. Despite these disagreements, the allies agreed that NATO's credibility was at stake and that they could not let Milosevic continue his escalated campaign of violence. NATO therefore found itself drawn into a major operation that lasted 78 days and involved more than 38,000 sorties.

After Operation Allied Force ended, individual allies strove to identify the lessons learned in Kosovo and to understand the implications for future operations. The operation highlighted a number of issues for the allies to address, such as using force to achieve humanitarian goals and how to improve military capabilities in a fiscally constrained environment. Specifically:

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<sup>1</sup>Operation Deliberate Force was NATO's first offensive operation, conducted in Bosnia between August 29 and September 14, 1995.

- It highlighted the growing gap between the military capabilities of the United States and Europe, and the decisions that constrain Europe's ability to redress the problem in the near term.
- It alerted some European capitals to the potential consequences of joining a limited-objective operation that subsequently expands to undesirable proportions and duration.
- It reemphasized the absence of consensus within the U.S. military and within the extended coalition on the appropriate application of air power.
- It revealed the vulnerabilities of large, multimember military coalitions engaged in operations for essentially humanitarian purposes when confronting an adversary whose very survival hangs in the balance.
- It displayed the limitations inherent in a fight-and-negotiate strategy, which again in the case of Kosovo brought hostilities to an end while leaving an unrepentant adversary in power with the means to continue resisting international efforts to institute the rule of law and fundamental human rights within Kosovo.

## IMPLICATIONS

As a result of Operation Allied Force, future operations may take a somewhat different form. For example, NATO as a whole may have difficulty mounting future operations, and smaller coalitions of willing allies may take military action without the unanimous support of all 19 Alliance members. Those countries that do participate may demand a fuller discussion of the campaign plan and the possible need for escalation before the operation commences. Future multinational campaigns will continue to reflect the military shortcomings of the European forces, despite the near-term efforts among many of the allies to shore up the most serious deficiencies.

These continuing deficiencies mean that the United States will be an indispensable part of future coalition operations. U.S. forces will have to provide their allied counterparts with key combat and support capabilities for the foreseeable future. This requirement will make force design and force sizing more difficult. Force planners will not only have to anticipate the likely demands of nearly simulta-

neous contingencies on U.S. forces, but they will also have to account for likely European shortcomings, especially in low-density, high-demand specialty assets.

The Europeans should expect continuing pressure from the United States for more defense spending in the near term. Whatever the merits of the long-term strategy of investing more efficiently in defense, the only credible short-term plan for redressing current deficiencies requires larger investments now. The European allies should expect continued emphasis on the Defense Capabilities Initiative, a U.S. plan adopted by NATO in April 1999 that stresses the need for all NATO forces to be interoperable, deployable, and sustainable. Furthermore, the Europeans should expect additional pressure from the United States to invest in proven U.S. programs rather than to fund new, unproven programs among themselves.

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## ACRONYMS

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AAR	Aerial refueling
ACTORD	Activation Order
ACTWARN	Activation Warning
AFSOUTH	Allied Forces Southern Europe
ATO	Air Tasking Order
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
CAOC	Combined Air Operations Center
CAP	Combat air patrol
CDU	Christian Democratic Party (Germany)
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CJTF	Combined Joint Task Force (NATO)
DCI	Defense Capabilities Initiative
ECR	Electronic Combat and Reconnaissance
ESDI	European Security and Defense Identity
EU	European Union
EW	Electronic warfare
FLA	Future Large Aircraft



FLIR	Forward-looking infrared
GDP	Gross domestic product
HARM	High-speed antiradiation missile
HLSG	High-Level Steering Group (NATO)
IADS	Integrated air defense system
IDS	Interdiction and strike
IFOR	Implementation Force (Bosnia)
ISR	Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
JDAM	Joint Direct Attack Munition
JSIMS	Joint Simulation System
JSOW	Joint Standoff Weapon
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
LANTIRN	Low Altitude Navigation and Targeting Infrared at Night
MFO	Multinational Force Observers
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OAF	Operation Allied Force
OCCAR	Joint Armaments Cooperation Organization
OPLAN	Operations Plan
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PfP	Partnership for Peace (NATO)
PGM	Precision-guided munition

RAF	Royal Air Force (United Kingdom)
RECCE	Reconnaissance
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Command Europe
SEAD	Suppression of enemy air defenses
SFOR	Stabilization Force (Bosnia)
UAV	Unmanned aerial vehicle
UN	United Nations
WEAG	Western European Armaments Group
WEU	West European Union

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Chapter One

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**INTRODUCTION**

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**ORIGINS OF THIS REPORT**

Operation Allied Force lasted 78 days, from March 24 through June 10, 1999. It raised a host of questions that remain controversial, including the effectiveness of air strikes to compel Serbian compliance with NATO's demands, and the true dimensions of the capabilities gap between the United States and the European air forces, among others. The assessment here concentrates on one of the aspects of Operation Allied Force (OAF): the operation's implications for the future of NATO military capabilities and the future of U.S.-European cooperative military campaigns.

The Europeans might have reacted to the Kosovo experience in at least three distinct ways. First, they could have concluded that their military performance was adequate and that no further modernization of their forces was necessary. Second, if they were sufficiently impressed by the technological superiority demonstrated by U.S. military forces, the Europeans might have moved more vigorously on the U.S.-nominated Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI), which would ultimately produce advanced forces adapted for operations beyond the immediate reach of their home-based support infrastructure. More closely embracing the DCI would also knit European and U.S. military capabilities more tightly within the NATO framework. Third, if the Europeans were put off by some aspect of U.S. performance within the coalition—perhaps the near-dominance of political-military design and planning of the operation, for example—then they might take a different tack and work more vigorously

to forge an independent European military capacity under the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI).<sup>1</sup> Such a step might enhance European influence in the design and planning of future operations.

### **The Defense Capabilities Initiative**

NATO officially launched the DCI during its 50th anniversary summit, held in Washington, DC, in April 1999. Although the summit occurred during Operation Allied Force, preparations for the DCI had been under way long before the military operation commenced. The United States initially proposed the DCI in June 1998, in response to some of the lessons learned during the Implementation Force (IFOR) and Stabilization Force (SFOR) deployments in Bosnia. The DCI emphasizes that all NATO forces need to be interoperable, deployable, and sustainable, and lists 58 specific projects and initiatives that can improve these capabilities.

The DCI has become part of the annual NATO planning process in which member nations report the steps they are taking to improve their military forces. The DCI was manifested significantly in the 1999 and 2000 force goals.<sup>2</sup> Few allies have thus far made the financial investments necessary to implement their force goals promptly. Full realization of the DCI will be a long-term project for most NATO members.

### **Influence of the European Defense and Security Identity**

The earliest steps towards a European security and defense identity were taken immediately after the end of the Cold War. The 1991 Maastricht treaty is best known for launching the single currency, but it also committed the members of the European Union (EU) to develop a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The text of the treaty states that this common policy "shall include all questions

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<sup>1</sup>Guillaume Parmentier makes this argument in "Redressing NATO's Imbalances," *Survival*, Vol. 42, No. 2, Summer 2000, pp. 96-112.

<sup>2</sup>At this writing (spring 2001) NATO has not yet published the individual countries' replies to the annual Defense Planning Questionnaire, which will reflect each country's decisions on force goals and improved capabilities for 2001.

related to the security of the Union, including the eventual framing of a common defense policy, which might in time lead to a common defence.”<sup>3</sup>

Progress on the CFSP proceeded slowly until 1997, when the Amsterdam Treaty created several new structures and procedures that enabled the EU members to harmonize their defense policies. First, the EU committed itself to take over the Western European Union’s (WEU’s) responsibility for the “Petersberg tasks” (named after the Bonn suburb where the Council of Ministers met) of humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking. The treaty also established several important coordination mechanisms, such as “constructive abstention,” which allowed members to abstain from an EU military decision without blocking it altogether. Other mechanisms included majority voting for decisions about implementing agreed policies and creating a central policy planning unit.<sup>4</sup> These mechanisms were an important step, but fell short of creating an institutional framework for the CFSP. During the treaty negotiations, France and Germany had proposed merging the WEU into the EU, thereby giving the Union the institutional structure for a European defense capability. However, the United Kingdom joined Denmark, Finland, and Sweden in killing the proposal. British decisionmakers, led by Prime Minister John Major, had long opposed any move toward an independent European military structure, fearing that it would weaken the transatlantic link and undermine NATO. The Amsterdam Treaty, therefore, committed the EU to take responsibility for the wide range of security issues addressed in the Petersberg tasks, but did not create the institutional capacity necessary for independent military action.

The May 1997 election in the United Kingdom led to a profound shift in British policies toward the ESDI and toward Europe more gener-

<sup>3</sup>The Treaty on European Union, Article J.4.1 (<http://europa.eu.int/en/record/mt/top.html>).

<sup>4</sup>Kori Schake, Amaya Block-Lainé, and Charles Grant, “Building a European Defence Capability,” *Survival*, Vol. 41, No. 1, Spring 1999, pp. 22–25; and Elmar Brok, Chairman of the European Parliament, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Security and Defense, Testimony to the House Committee on International Relations, November 10, 1999.

ally. Unlike his Conservative Party predecessors, Tony Blair did not believe that close relations with Europe would necessarily come at the expense of close relations with the United States. Quite to the contrary, he felt that the two could be pursued at the same time, and that all these relations would benefit as a result. During his first year in office, Blair decided that his government should lead a major new European initiative. Blair knew that he could not lead any sort of economic initiative, since the United Kingdom had opted out of the common European currency. But the CFSP realm was wide open, and a serious initiative in this area would demonstrate that the new British government was serious about improving its relations with Europe and strengthening the EU. On October 21, 1998, Blair announced that the United Kingdom would support the EU in establishing its own defense capability.<sup>5</sup>

France reacted cautiously, perhaps because the United Kingdom had opposed a European defense capability for so long. To convince France that this policy shift was genuine, the British Prime Minister and Defense Minister met personally with their French counterparts and described their commitment to this new initiative. The French position on an EU military had also shifted during the previous years. French attitudes towards NATO had mellowed, because of policy changes enacted by the Chirac government and the positive military cooperative experiences during the IFOR and SFOR deployments in Bosnia. French and British preferences had therefore converged by the end of 1998, and the two countries agreed to formulate a bilateral initiative on European defense.

France and the United Kingdom held a joint summit in Saint Malo on December 3 and 4, 1998, and they issued a statement on European Defense. It stated that to implement the CFSP, the EU "must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to use them and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises." It also called for the EU to develop "appropriate structures and a capacity for independent analysis of situations, sources of intelligence and a capability for relevant strategic planning" so that it may act in cases where NATO

<sup>5</sup>Tom Buerkle, "Blair Now Backs EU Defense Arm," *International Herald Tribune*, October 22, 1998.

chooses not to act.<sup>6</sup> The Saint Malo statement marked a strong rhetorical commitment to an independent EU military capability, but questions remained about whether the EU members would follow this rhetoric with concrete action. The EU has appointed Javier Solana to be the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, but the military command structure for this force has yet to be established.

As of this writing, the critical unanswered question about ESDI is its future relationship with NATO. The United States has long feared that an independent European security and defense policy will lead to the development of separate institutions, which would divert scarce defense resources from NATO and create redundant facilities rather than more capable forces. France has insisted that Europe should develop fully separate defense capabilities so that Europe can act when the United States chooses not to, and as a way to counter-balance "American hegemony." Others, including the British, have sought to develop European security and defense policy in ways that will complement NATO. Thus far the dispute remains unresolved, and real progress toward a European rapid reaction force, the first tangible result of ESDI, has been slow.<sup>7</sup>

### Agreeing on a Way Ahead

Operation Allied Force has influenced the Europeans' perspectives on both ESDI and DCI, and is likely to have further impact upon them as their respective military institutions respond to the lessons learned from the Kosovo campaign. Operation Allied Force involved all 19 allies, including 13 that participated directly in the air operations. Many of the participants conducted after-action inquiries, both formally and informally, to see what lessons might be learned from the Kosovo experience. The actual implementation of the ESDI and DCI will reflect the allies' lessons learned and shape the future military capacity of Europe and thus the Europeans' ability to operate harmoniously with the U.S. military. It is therefore important to

<sup>6</sup>The text of the Saint Malo Declaration is reprinted in Schake et al., pp. 23–24.

<sup>7</sup>See Joe Murphy, "US Launches Attack on Euro Army," *London Sunday Telegraph*, March 18, 2001, p. 1. See also Helen Fessenden, "A Rapid-Reaction Force in Search of an Emergency," *Los Angeles Times*, January 21, 2001.

come to a shared understanding of the lessons from Operation Allied Force, since without some common view the individual lessons learned might pull the Alliance in many different, perhaps competing, directions.

It is the objective of this study to offer an impartial perspective on the lessons of OAF and to suggest a constructive approach for Europe and the United States to follow toward future Euro-Atlantic military capabilities: a way ahead.

## ORGANIZATION OF SUBSEQUENT CHAPTERS

Chapter Two summarizes the highlights of OAF. Because OAF has been the subject of official NATO and United States reports, Chapter Two summarizes only the information necessary to support analysis in subsequent chapters.<sup>8</sup>

Chapter Three considers the various national perspectives on Operation Allied Force. To do so, the chapter collects the judgments of France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Britain, including their respective positions on the quality of "interoperability" (the ability of military units and their equipment to interact effectively). The chapter also reports on the overall evaluation of the campaign, the value of OAF as a model for future multinational operations, the individual defense areas emphasized as a result of the OAF experience, and finally, the allies' attitudes toward the United States in the aftermath of the campaign.

Chapter Four attempts to reconcile the individual national perspectives. It reviews priorities and imperatives for shaping Euro-Atlantic relations, and considers the requirements likely to define and shape future combined military operations and the implications for the DCI and ESDI. It concludes by suggesting a revised template for U.S.-European military operations.

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<sup>8</sup>Department of Defense Report to Congress, "Kosovo/Operation Allied Force: After-Action Report," January 31, 2000 (<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/kaar02072000.pdf>), and Lord Robertson of Port Ellen, Secretary General of NATO, "Kosovo One Year On: Achievement and Challenge," April 13, 2000, (<http://www.nato.int/kosovo/repo2000/index.htm>).



Chapter Five presents the study's conclusions about OAF's implications for NATO, the European allies, the United States, and the U.S. Air Force.

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## HIGHLIGHTS OF OPERATION ALLIED FORCE

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Operation Allied Force was a watershed in NATO's history, marking a major departure from its Cold War role. NATO forces engaged in a large-scale offensive operation outside its members' borders, demonstrating the Alliance's ability to act when challenged. The operation was all the more remarkable because it did not directly affect the territorial integrity or sovereignty of NATO's members, but instead sought to halt the growing humanitarian disaster taking shape in Kosovo that might later become a source of significant regional instability. Operation Allied Force therefore represented the continuing institutional and doctrinal transition within NATO, begun in 1995, from a singularly defensive-minded institution to one that could deploy to the periphery of Europe after an extended period of deliberate planning to stabilize an adjacent crisis area. This chapter offers an overview of NATO's decision to intervene in Kosovo, national military contributions to Operation Allied Force, the conduct of the air campaign, and the controversial tactics used by the Alliance.

### NATO'S DECISION TO INTERVENE

Ever since the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1991, the United States identified Kosovo as a potential location for regional conflict in the Balkans. Kosovo had been an autonomous province within Serbia until Milosevic revoked its special status in 1989. Because Kosovo's population was more than 90 percent Albanian, the United States feared that a conflict in Kosovo could spark unrest among the majority population in Albania and minority populations in Macedonia.

From there, the conflict could spread to other states with significant Albanian populations, such as Greece, and perhaps even reach Italy. In 1992, while the civil war in Bosnia erupted, the United States clearly communicated that it would not stand by if the war spread to Kosovo. On December 27, 1992, the Bush administration warned Milosevic that, "In the event of conflict in Kosovo caused by Serbian action, the United States will be prepared to employ military force against the Serbs in Kosovo and in Serbia proper."<sup>1</sup> Three weeks later, the newly elected Clinton administration repeated the pledge, signaling that American policy remained unchanged.

Kosovo remained largely peaceful over the next few years, while both the Serbs and the international community focused their attention on the war in Bosnia. Kosovo briefly appeared on the American radar screen in 1995, during the preparations for the peace talks that ultimately ended the Bosnian war. Yet the American planners of the Dayton peace conference deliberately excluded Kosovo from the agenda, believing that divisive debates over Kosovo might provoke an outbreak of conflict in the region.<sup>2</sup> Once the Dayton accords were signed in the fall of 1995, the United States and the NATO allies deployed a substantial peacekeeping force to Bosnia, first with the Implementation Force (IFOR) and then with its successor, the Stabilization Force (SFOR).

As Bosnia grew more stable, however, Kosovo grew progressively less so. A small group of guerrilla fighters, known as the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), had become convinced that Kosovo's autonomy could be restored only through the use of force. The KLA grew slowly in strength through the mid-1990s, and although it never mounted a major military challenge, its sporadic attacks on Serbian security forces became increasingly irritating for Milosevic. In February 1998, Serbian forces responded to one of these attacks with a brutal crackdown in the area around Drenica. Several KLA members and their families were killed in a gruesome fashion, apparently in an effort to deter further KLA attacks. However, KLA attacks con-

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in David Binder, "Bush Warns Serbs Not to Widen War," *New York Times*, December 28, 1992.

<sup>2</sup>Richard Caplan, "International Diplomacy and the Crisis in Kosovo," *International Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 4, October 1998, pp. 750-751.

tinued throughout the spring of 1998, and the Serbian security forces continued to retaliate by killing KLA members. Kosovo civilians often found themselves trapped in the crossfire of these attacks.

American officials understood that these killings were precisely the type of activity for which the United States had threatened unilateral military action in 1992. However, they also understood that the political context had changed significantly in the intervening six years. Now, unlike 1992, the NATO nations had tens of thousands of ground troops deployed in Bosnia as part of SFOR. Clinton administration officials determined that any military response would have to be conducted by the NATO Alliance as a whole. As one U.S. official explained, "the idea of us using force over the objection of allies who have troops on the ground, subject to retaliation, is fantasyland. Allies do not do that to each other."<sup>3</sup> From this point on, most major decisions regarding Kosovo were made by the Contact Group<sup>4</sup> or NATO's political oversight body, the North Atlantic Council (NAC), which requires decisions to be approved unanimously by all Alliance members.<sup>5</sup>

NATO's military planners started preparing for a possible operation in Kosovo in May and June 1998.<sup>6</sup> By that time, NATO's political leaders had started to threaten the use of force against Milosevic if he did not stop the violence in Kosovo, and they needed concrete operational plans for their threats to be credible. The NAC tasked NATO's military authorities to develop a wide range of alternative options, from preventive deployments to a full ground invasion. NATO planners generated ten options for preventive deployments, which included NATO support for Organization for Security and

<sup>3</sup>Barton Gellman, "The Path to Crisis: How the United States and Its Allies Went to War," *Washington Post*, April 18, 1999.

<sup>4</sup>The Contact Group is an informal body that evolved early in the U.S. involvement in the Balkan crisis to broker amicable solutions for all concerned. Member countries include France, Germany, Italy, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

<sup>5</sup>Elaine Sciolino and Ethan Bronner, "How a President, Distracted by Scandal, Entered Balkan War," *New York Times*, April 18, 1999.

<sup>6</sup>General Wesley Clark, testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, July 1, 1999; Secretary of Defense William Cohen and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Henry Shelton, testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, October 14, 1999; General John Jumper, testimony to the House Armed Services Committee, Military Readiness Subcommittee, October 26, 1999.

Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) monitors in Albania, support for enforcing the UN arms embargo against Yugoslavia, deployments in Albania and Macedonia to prevent the conflict from spreading, and NATO assistance for antismuggling activities in Albania. These options would have required between 7000 and 23,000 NATO troops. They also generated several options involving the more overt use of force, including a phased air campaign and four options for a ground invasion of Yugoslavia. Two of the ground-force options involved NATO enforcement of a ceasefire agreement with full consent of the parties. These options, called Options A and A-, would involve between 28,000 and 50,000 NATO troops. The other two ground-force options involved a forced entry and a far more significant military presence. Option B would be a full ground invasion of all of Yugoslavia, requiring 200,000 NATO troops. Option B- would limit the ground invasion to Kosovo only, and would require 75,000 NATO troops.<sup>7</sup>

The sizes of the estimated necessary forces were generally seen as evidence of an overly cautious military, basing its estimates on the most pessimistic planning assumptions. Nevertheless, the NAC quickly decided that either invasion option would be far too costly, requiring many more troops than it was willing to commit. As Secretary of Defense William Cohen later recalled, "that assessment was done and placed on the shelf because there was no consensus to do that."<sup>8</sup> Instead, the NAC directed military planners to prepare a detailed operational plan for an air campaign against Milosevic and for a post-conflict peacekeeping force. The peacekeeping force would require far fewer ground troops, since it would be deployed only with Yugoslavia's consent.

As NATO's military leaders prepared plans for an air campaign, some of the Alliance's political leaders expressed concern about the legal basis of such an operation. The European allies generally felt that they could not conduct offensive operations against Yugoslavia

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<sup>7</sup>Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2000, pp. 33–34.

<sup>8</sup>Cohen testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, April 15, 1999. Several other NATO decisionmakers have made similar comments. See Clark testimony, July 1, 1999; General Klaus Naumann, testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, November 3, 1999.

without an explicit mandate from the United Nations, formalized in a Security Council resolution. The United States countered that such a resolution was not only impractical—it was sure to be vetoed by Russia or China—but also unnecessary. During several weeks of intense diplomacy, American officials argued that Article IV of the NATO charter provided legal justification for the Alliance to act whenever its interests were threatened.<sup>9</sup> The Europeans remained unconvinced until late September, when a particularly brutal attack on the KLA drew their attention. In a single day, Serbian police forces killed a family of more than 20 people and executed 13 additional men. Political support for air strikes began to grow after this attack, as the Europeans grew increasingly sensitive to the violence in Kosovo.<sup>10</sup> When the NATO defense ministers met in Vilamoura, Portugal, on September 24 and 25, 1998, Secretary of Defense William Cohen and NATO Secretary General Javier Solana forcefully argued that averting a major humanitarian catastrophe should supersede the need for an authorizing UN resolution.<sup>11</sup> By the end of this meeting, the NATO ministers agreed to threaten air strikes against Milosevic if he did not stop the violence in Kosovo. They issued instructions called Activation Warnings (ACTWARNs) for both limited air strikes and the phased air campaign, which authorized NATO commanders to designate the forces that would be used to carry out these operations. On October 13, the North Atlantic Council took the next step and issued a series of Activation Orders (ACTORDs) for both types of operation, authorizing NATO's military commanders to prepare to execute these air operations.<sup>12</sup>

The next two weeks saw intensive Alliance efforts at coercive diplomacy, combining military threats with parallel diplomatic initiatives. On October 18, Milosevic was visited by NATO's top three officials—

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<sup>9</sup>Cohen testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, April 15, 1999, July 20, 1999, and October 14, 1999.

<sup>10</sup>Jane Perlez, "Step by Step: How the U.S. Decided to Attack, and Why the Move Came So Fast," *New York Times*, March 26, 1999.

<sup>11</sup>One report indicates that Solana's background as a Spanish socialist and former anti-NATO activist proved particularly important in convincing the Europeans of the merits of this position. William Drozdiak, "Once Again, Europe Follows American Lead," *Washington Post*, March 26, 1999.

<sup>12</sup>Daalder and O'Hanlon, pp. 43–48; United States Department of Defense, "Kosovo/Operation Allied Force After-Action Report," January 31, 2000, p. 21.

Secretary General Solana; General Klaus Naumann, the chairman of NATO's Military Committee; and General Wesley Clark, the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe (SACEUR). In Naumann's words, this group went to Belgrade "to deliver the message that the activation order was in place, and that [Milosevic] would be better advised to comply."<sup>13</sup> At the same time, the Contact Group dispatched Richard Holbrooke to find a diplomatic solution to the brewing crisis. Holbrooke knew Milosevic better than any other Western official, after his intense efforts to broker the Dayton peace accords.<sup>14</sup> After nine days of negotiation, Milosevic agreed to withdraw his military and police forces from Kosovo, and to allow up to 2000 unarmed personnel from the OSCE into Kosovo to monitor that withdrawal.<sup>15</sup> NATO seemed satisfied with this solution, believing that it averted a tremendous humanitarian crisis from emerging during the harsh Balkan winter. Yet NATO did not revoke its activation order: NATO military forces retained the authorization to plan and prepare for offensive operations against Yugoslavia.<sup>16</sup>

In retrospect, it appears that Milosevic never intended to honor the terms of this agreement.<sup>17</sup> Several NATO leaders believed at the time that Milosevic had already decided to solve the Kosovo problem by the use of force, but later admitted that they overlooked specific signals that preparations for a Serbian offensive were already well under way.<sup>18</sup> Serbian forces conducted sporadic attacks in Kosovo throughout the winter, in what they claimed was an effort to counter KLA "terrorists." NATO chose to look the other way, hoping that these incidents would not derail the larger diplomatic agreement that they had secured. In January 1999, Serbian forces in the town of Racak massacred more than 45 unarmed ethnic Albanians. U.S. decisionmakers quickly reached agreement that the Holbrooke arrangements could no longer be sustained, and soon forged a consen-

<sup>13</sup>Naumann testimony, November 3, 1999.

<sup>14</sup>Richard Holbrooke, *To End a War*, New York: Random House, 1998.

<sup>15</sup>Jane Perlez, "Milosevic Accepts Kosovo Monitors, Averting Attack," *New York Times*, October 14, 1998.

<sup>16</sup>Clark testimony, July 1, 1999.

<sup>17</sup>For more on the flaws of this agreement, see Daalder and O'Hanlon, pp. 49–59.

<sup>18</sup>Craig R. Whitney with Eric Schmitt, "NATO Had Signs Its Strategy Would Fail Kosovars," *New York Times*, April 1, 1999; Naumann testimony, November 3, 1999.

sus among the NATO allies to pursue a stronger variant of coercive diplomacy.<sup>19</sup> On the diplomatic side, the Contact Group demanded that the Serbs and the KLA meet in Rambouillet, France, to forge a binding settlement. On the military side, the NATO ministers gave Secretary General Solana the power to authorize air strikes at his discretion. This made the threat of air strikes far more credible, because it transferred decisionmaking authority from a committee of 19 to a single person. NATO hoped once again that the combination of credible air strikes and diplomatic pressure would forge a lasting solution.<sup>20</sup>

The Rambouillet talks lasted almost three weeks but disbanded without a signed agreement. Neither side believed that the proposed settlement satisfied its core interests. The Serbs opposed the provision that granted NATO forces access to all of Yugoslavia, while several KLA members insisted that a referendum be held on Kosovo independence after three years.<sup>21</sup> During and after the Rambouillet talks, Serbian forces continued their buildup in and around Kosovo. As the NATO ministers watched this process unfold, they realized that they would have to use some form of military force to resolve the Kosovo crisis. However, the Alliance faced the same lack of consensus on a ground option as it had faced the previous October. Because a ground invasion remained off the agenda, the Alliance faced two rather stark options. In the words of General Hugh Shelton, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "We could do zero or we could carry out the NATO air power plan."<sup>22</sup> Some Alliance members remained reluctant to act without UN authorization, but Solana repeated his argument that an impending humanitarian crisis superseded the requirements of international law.<sup>23</sup> While NATO debated the proper policy, Serbian forces continued their buildup. By mid-March, more than 30,000 Serbian troops were already in Kosovo—twice the number allowed under the Holbrooke agree-

<sup>19</sup>Daalder and O'Hanlon, pp. 69–77.

<sup>20</sup>Whitney with Schmitt, April 1, 1999.

<sup>21</sup>For more details on the talks, see Marc Weller, "The Rambouillet Conference on Kosovo," *International Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 2, pp. 211–251; Daalder and O'Hanlon, pp. 77–89.

<sup>22</sup>Shelton testimony to the House Armed Services Committee, April 15, 1999.

<sup>23</sup>Drozdiak, March 26, 1999.



ment—and 40,000 more troops were massing along the Kosovo border. Intelligence estimates indicated that Milosevic could launch an ethnic cleansing campaign against the Kosovar Albanians in as little as a week.<sup>24</sup> Clinton administration officials successfully convinced the Alliance members, as well as the reluctant Joint Chiefs of Staff, to support the air campaign, to avert a humanitarian disaster and to preserve NATO's leadership in European security affairs.<sup>25</sup>

By March 1999, the plans for the air campaign had gone through a myriad of 40 changes and iterations since the previous fall.<sup>26</sup> The official mission statement called for the Alliance to “Conduct operations against military targets throughout Yugoslavia to degrade Serbian capability to conduct repressive actions against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.”<sup>27</sup> To achieve this mission, Operational Plan (OPLAN) 10601 specified three distinct phases for the air campaign:

Phase I: establish air superiority over Serbia and supremacy over Kosovo by taking out Serbian air defense systems, and reduce Serbian command and control capabilities;

Phase II: attack military targets inside Kosovo, as well as Serbian reinforcements in Yugoslavia south of the 44th parallel;

Phase III: expand air operations to cover a wide range of military targets throughout the whole territory of Yugoslavia.<sup>28</sup>

Some European and U.S. officials, including the U.S. Secretary of State, believed that Milosevic would capitulate after two or three days of air strikes, making parts of Phase II and all of Phase III unnecessary. U.S. interagency reports in January and February 1999 promoted this position, arguing that “After enough of a defense to sustain his honor and assuage his backers [Milosevic] will quickly sue

<sup>24</sup>Whitney with Schmitt, April 1, 1999.

<sup>25</sup>Bradley Graham, “Joint Chiefs Doubted Air Strategy,” *Washington Post*, April 5, 1999.

<sup>26</sup>Jumper testimony, October 26, 1999.

<sup>27</sup>Bradley Graham and William Drozdiak, “Allied Action Fails to Stop Serb Brutality,” *Washington Post*, March 31, 1999.

<sup>28</sup>Cohen and Shelton testimony, October 14, 1999.

for peace.”<sup>29</sup> NATO leaders therefore assumed that the air campaign would last two to four days before Milosevic would decide to withdraw his forces from Kosovo.<sup>30</sup> NATO deliberately did not prepare contingency plans in case Milosevic remained steadfast in his position and military action beyond the original three-phased plan became necessary. Clinton administration officials and SACEUR Clark worried that if the NAC had to contemplate a more prolonged campaign, it would withdraw its support for *any* air strikes.<sup>31</sup>

Operation Allied Force commenced on March 24, 1999. That night, President Clinton gave a nationally televised television address in which he described NATO’s objectives in the campaign:

Our mission is clear: to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO’s purpose so that the Serbian leaders understand the imperative of reversing course. To deter an even bloodier offensive against innocent civilians in Kosovo and, if necessary, to seriously damage the Serbian military’s capacity to harm the people of Kosovo. In short, if President Milosevic will not make peace, we will limit his ability to make war.<sup>32</sup>

Clinton also ruled out the prospect of broadening the operation beyond the air campaign, clearly stating “I do not intend to put our troops in Kosovo to fight a war.” This appeared to be a fairly safe statement, because NATO and American officials still believed that the campaign would last less than a week. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright expressed the conventional wisdom during an interview that evening: “I don’t see this as a long-term operation. I

<sup>29</sup>Sciolino and Bronner, April 18, 1999. Specific agencies are not named in the article.

<sup>30</sup>Craig R. Whitney, “NATO’s Plan: A Barrage, Not a Pinprick,” *New York Times*, March 24, 1999; Michael Dobbs, “After the Bombs Fall, What Next?” *Washington Post*, March 24, 1999; Michael R. Gordon with Eric Schmitt, “U.S. Sought Shift After Raids Failed to Deter Milosevic,” *New York Times*, March 31, 1999; Richard J. Newman, “The Bombs that Failed in Kosovo,” *U.S. News & World Report*, September 20, 1999; John Donnelly, “Kosovo War Still Raging in Brussels,” *Defense Week*, February 7, 2000.

<sup>31</sup>Dana Priest, “Tension Grew With Divide Over Strategy,” *Washington Post*, September 21, 1999.

<sup>32</sup>Transcript of Clinton Remarks in Address to the Nation, White House Press Office, March 24, 1999.

think that this is something, the deter and damage, is something that is achievable within a relatively short period of time.”<sup>33</sup>

Unfortunately, Milosevic did not follow NATO's script. Instead of surrendering after the first bombs fell, he accelerated the ethnic cleansing campaign in Kosovo. The Serbian forces massed along the border moved in quickly and efficiently, executing what must have been a well-developed plan to terrorize and kill ethnic Albanians. Instead of dropping bombs for a few nights, NATO soon found itself drawn into an extended military operation that lasted for 78 days.

## THE NATIONAL CONTINGENTS

All 19 members of NATO officially supported Operation Allied Force, and some made invaluable contributions beyond flight operations by opening their airspace and bases to allied air forces and their support units, and by providing essential services and facilities to forces en route to the operation. The national contributions described here, however, focus on the air power of the various participants.

Thirteen countries contributed military aircraft to Operation Allied Force. The specific force commitments and sortie rates, although an imperfect measure of each country's contribution, are summarized in Tables 2.1 and 2.2. The U.S. contribution is discussed after the summaries of other nations' contributions.

### France

Of all the European allies, France contributed the most in terms of deployed aircraft and assets, as well as the number of sorties flown. France deployed over 100 aircraft to OAF and flew 2414 sorties. Like other European allies, France's deployed aircraft consisted primarily of fighter aircraft. During the height of the air campaign, France deployed approximately eight Mirage 2000Ds, 12 Jaguar strike aircraft, six Mirage F1 CTs, three Mirage IV Ps, and several Super Entendards to fly strike sorties. The French along with the British were among

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<sup>33</sup>Albright interview with the NewsHour, March 24, 1999, as quoted in John F. Harris, "Reassuring Rhetoric, Reality in Conflict," *Washington Post*, April 8, 1999.

Table 2.1  
Summary of Allied Aircraft Contributions

Country	Fighter/Bomber/Recce	Transport	Tanker	AWACS/AEW	Helicopter
Belgium	12 F-16				
Canada	18 CF-18				
Denmark	9 F-16				
France	12 Jaguar 3 Mirage IV-P 6 Mirage F1CR 8 Mirage 2000C 8 Mirage 2000D 4 Etendard IV pa	1 C-160	3 KC-135	1 E-3F SDCA	4 Super Frelon <sup>a</sup>
Germany	14 Tornado				
Italy	22 Tornado ECR/IDS 6 AMX 6 F-104 ASA 6 Tornado IDS 4 Tornado ECR/IDS 4 F-104 ASA	1 C-160	1 Boeing 707T		
Netherlands	18 F-16		2 KDC-10		
Norway	6 F-16	1 C-130			
Portugal	3 F-16	1 KC-130			
Spain	6 EF-18	1 CASA 212			
Turkey	11 F-16				
UK	16 Harrier GR-7 1 Canberra PR-9 12 Tornado 7 Sea Harrier FA-2 <sup>a</sup>	4 L-1011	3 VC-10	2 E-3D	10 Sea King <sup>a</sup>

SOURCE: <http://www.stratfor.com/crisis/kosovo/natoorderofbattle.htm>.

<sup>a</sup>Indicates carrier-based aircraft.

**Table 2.2**  
**Summary of Sorties by Key European Air Forces**

Sortie Type	France	Germany	Italy	Netherlands	United Kingdom
Aerial refueling	389	0	90	126	291
Combat air patrol	458	0	362	656	148
Close air support	396	0	358	110	686
Battlefield air interdiction	821	0	90	319	415
Suppression of enemy air defenses	0	414	170	0	4
Reconnaissance	230	205	10	41	205
Airborne early warning	49	0	0	0	163
Electronic intelligence	71	17	1	0	38

SOURCE: <http://www.stratfor.com/crisis/kosovo/natoorderofbattle.htm>.

the few European allies to possess and employ precision-guided munitions (PGMs). This capability allowed France to participate at a greater level in the strike phase of air operations, in the face of restrictive rules of engagement, prevailing weather conditions, and challenging terrain. The majority of the PGMs employed by the French were Paveway II and III laser-guided bombs, although they also fired some AS30L air-to-surface missiles.<sup>34</sup>

France, in comparison with the other European allies, also deployed a substantial number of support aircraft to the area of operations. France contributed more than 30 support aircraft that flew over 1600 sorties in a variety of missions. The deployment included eight Mirage 2000Cs for Combat Air Patrol (CAP); four Mirage F1 CRs and one C-160G for electronic warfare (EW); three Mirage IV Ps, two E-3F Airborne Warning and Control (AWAC) aircraft, and several CL-289 drones and Crecerelle unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) missions; and three KC-135F for aerial refueling—most of the support aircraft the non-U.S. allies deployed to OAF.<sup>35</sup> France flew approximately 21 percent

<sup>34</sup>France's Ministry of Defense Official Report, "Lessons from Kosovo," pp. 39–51.

<sup>35</sup>*Periscope*, "Operation Allied Forces, 5/25/99," <http://www.periscope.ucg.com/special/archive/special-199905251227.shtml>.

of all reconnaissance missions, 12 percent of strike missions, and 12 percent of transport and support missions.<sup>36</sup>

## Germany

The German *Luftwaffe* played an important role in the air operations, flying 636 sorties, primarily in support of the suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD) mission. The Germans deployed 14 Tornados to support OAF, ten of which were Tornado electronic combat and reconnaissance (ECR) and four of which were interdiction and strike Tornados fitted with reconnaissance pods. The Tornado ECR were used extensively for suppressing enemy air defenses, while the four Tornado with pods were used to gather reconnaissance on ground units and refugee flows. At the time of OAF, German aircraft were not equipped with PGMs for strike missions; however, they possessed AGM-88 HARM antiradiation missiles and advanced electronic countermeasures, which allowed them to play a important role in SEAD.

The other air asset that Germany deployed with some success was the CL-289 reconnaissance drone. Tasked directly by the Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC), the German drones flew 237 sorties. Approximately 90 percent of them successfully gathered information and returned safely to friendly airspace. Many sorties were flown where manned aircraft were prohibited, below the cloud base, and provided the allies with pre- and post-strike battle damage assessments and target acquisition data. Although the Germans possessed only drones (as opposed to the more versatile UAVs capable of autonomous operation), which have a limited loiter time and range, the drones were still effective in the reconnaissance and surveillance role they undertook in Kosovo.

## Italy

Italy was the third largest contributor of aircraft to Operation Allied Force, and flew the fourth largest number of sorties. The Italian Air

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<sup>36</sup>"Lessons from Kosovo," official French lessons learned document, English translation, Annex 2.

Force deployed 18 IDS (interdiction and strike) Tornados, 4 Tornado ECRs, and several AMX (attack) aircraft, flying approximately 1081 sorties.<sup>37</sup> Like the Germans, the Tornado ECRs were the “shooters” in the SEAD mission, firing HARMs to aid in the suppression of enemy air defenses. The Tornado IDS and AMX were used primarily to fly CAP sorties. The Italians did not deploy any traditional support aircraft.

Italy’s largest support contribution probably came in the form of air bases. Although uncomfortably small in terms of apron and storage space, these bases provided the allies with some semblance of close-proximity basing options.

### **The Netherlands**

At the height of air operations, the Royal Netherlands Air Force deployed 18 F-16A fighter aircraft to the Balkans. These aircraft flew approximately 1252 sorties under the strike or CAP heading.<sup>38</sup> Unlike many of the other European allies, the Dutch fighter aircraft were equipped with forward-looking infrared (FLIR), allowing them to participate in strike missions at night.<sup>39</sup> One source estimates that between 20 percent and 30 percent of all Dutch sorties were flown at night.<sup>40</sup> However, these Dutch aircraft did not carry PGMs, and so their night capabilities were increasingly marginalized as the rules of engagement grew stricter. The Dutch deployed two KDC-10 aerial refueling (AAR) tankers as support aircraft.<sup>41</sup>

### **The United Kingdom**

The Royal Air Force (RAF) was the second largest contributing allied air force, deploying 45 fixed-wing aircraft and flying some 1950 sorties. For strike and CAP missions, the RAF deployed 16 Harrier

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<sup>37</sup>“Lessons from Kosovo,” p. 39.

<sup>38</sup>“Lessons from Kosovo,” p. 39.

<sup>39</sup>Royal Dutch Air Force Website ([www.mindef.nl/english/rnlaf1.html](http://www.mindef.nl/english/rnlaf1.html)).

<sup>40</sup>Martijn Delaere and Joris Janssen Lok, “The Dutch Recipe: Flexibility, Readiness,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, October 27, 1999, p. 26.

<sup>41</sup>Meeting with Dutch air attaché, April 2000.

GR7s, seven Sea Harrier FA2s, and three Tornado GR1s. The RAF flew 1008 strike missions.<sup>42</sup> Like the French air force, the British air force had the advantage of PGMs in its arsenal and was able to participate in a higher percentage of strike missions. The PGMs the British used were predominantly Paveway II and III laser-guided bombs. They also fired a small number of ALARM antiradiation missiles. Although both Great Britain and France possessed and employed PGMs, their contribution was nonetheless limited, because they lacked all-weather munitions capabilities to address the adverse weather conditions that existed throughout the campaign.

RAF support aircraft deployed to OAF consisted of three E-3Ds and one Nimrod for Airborne Early Warning and ISR missions; four Tristars and five VC10s were deployed for aerial refueling; and various fighter aircraft were used to fly CAP sorties.<sup>43</sup> As was the case with France, support aircraft deployed to Operation Allied Force represented a minimal share of the aircraft deployed to the region. The British deployment of 9 aerial refueling tankers represented about 80 percent of the European aerial refueling assets deployed to the area of operation, or about 14 percent of the European aerial refueling aircraft inventory.

## The United States

The United States deployed the most aircraft to the air operations against Serbia, more than 700 aircraft of the total 1055 allied effort to OAF. The majority came from the USAF, which deployed 214 fighter aircraft, 18 bombers, 25 ISR aircraft, 38 SpecOps/Rescue/other aircraft, and 43 intratheater airlifters. The EA-6 Prowler also significantly contributed to the air campaign. This air asset flew most of the SEAD sorties, providing standoff jamming for the allies. Collectively, the U.S. air fleet flew more than 29,000 sorties.<sup>44</sup> The

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<sup>42</sup>United Kingdom's Ministry of Defense, "Kosovo—An Account of the Crisis—Operation Allied Force: NATO Air Campaign in FRY," <http://www.mod.uk/news/kosovo/account/stats.htm>.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup>This total includes 11,480 sorties flown by airlifters; the 38,004 official NATO number of sorties includes only intratheater airlift.



United States also delivered the largest number of PGMs and all-weather munitions. JDAM, JSOW, Paveway II and III, Maverick, AGM-130, air- and sea-launched cruise missiles, and other guided weapons were all released during OAF. Given the restrictive rules of engagement (ROE) and weather conditions, these highly accurate weapons proved to be indispensable in prosecuting the air war.<sup>45</sup>

What is the most striking about the U.S. contribution, however, is the number of support aircraft deployed in OAF. Of the approximately 700 U.S. aircraft deployed throughout the region, roughly 70 percent were considered support aircraft. This large number of support aircraft reflects the growing importance of these assets in the types of operations NATO could face in the future. The United States provided over 90 percent of the AAR and all the tactical jamming capabilities for the SEAD mission. It also provided the bulk of the airlift capabilities for OAF with the C-17 and C-130. Although the allied C-160 Transall performed well, there were not enough of this asset to provide the level of support necessary for an operation the size of OAF. As part of the ISR component, the United States deployed several Predator and Hunter UAVs, which provided valuable targeting and reconnaissance information to the CAOC under challenging conditions.<sup>46</sup>

## CONDUCT OF AIR OPERATIONS

Operation Allied Force proved a poor venue for comparing U.S. and allied performance. Although intra-Alliance politics made Operation Allied force possible, the political and operational constraints resulting from the bargain also prevented the United States from pressing its advantages in high-tempo, continuous operations; precision strike; and overwhelming levels of force. These constraints therefore make it difficult to compare the operational capabilities of the U.S. and European air forces. The conditions of coalition warfare produced a slower, more deliberate air campaign, which accommodated the essential consultative and deliberative functions necessary to

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<sup>45</sup>"Kosovo/Operation Allied Force: After-Action Report," p. xxiii.

<sup>46</sup>"Kosovo/Operation Allied Force: After-Action Report" p. xxiv.

prevent defections among the 13 participating states, and to secure domestic and international popular support for the operation.

This approach allowed NATO to sustain a political consensus throughout the 78 days of the air campaign, but it constrained the size, pace, targets, and amount of force applied during the operation. As a result, the allies did not confront the challenge of rapidly planning missions, including rearming and refueling aircraft for sustained periods of time to generate maximum sortie rates. Compared to the large number of fighter aircraft massed against Serbian forces, there were relatively few approved targets to hit. Under these conditions, when allied aircraft were not able to fly a mission because of night or bad weather or the inability to deliver the required munitions, the mission could be passed to the United States with few consequences for the overall outcome of the operation. The result was an air operation in which the allies appeared to shoulder a significant part of the burden and seemed to perform reasonably well. Most allied deficiencies were accommodated to maintain political cohesion among the participating countries. Figure 2.1 illustrates that the United States provided more sorties than did the allies in all mission categories.

With the foregoing limitations on U.S.-allied comparisons in mind, we turn to the conduct of air operations, beginning with targeting and moving on to review the specific types of missions: combat air patrol, reconnaissance, SEAD, aerial refueling, and strike.

## Targeting

When Operation Allied Force commenced, NATO's Master Target File included 169 targets, of which 51 were initially approved. By the end of the operation in June 1999, it had grown to include more than 976 targets, enough to fill six volumes.<sup>47</sup> Because NATO had not anticipated a long campaign, the newly nominated targets had not been developed fully in advance. Each of the additional 807 targets had to be proposed, reviewed, and approved by NATO and national authorities before being added to the master list. This cumbersome

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<sup>47</sup>Dana Priest, "Target Selection Was Long Process," *Washington Post*, September 20, 1999.

process revealed major divisions among the NATO allies and limited the military effectiveness of the operation.

The first step in this process was to identify a potential target. The United States proposed many of these, largely because it had the largest share of intelligence assets in the theater, but other NATO members also nominated targets that they identified on their own.<sup>48</sup> The prospective targets were passed on to the Joint Target Coordination Board, which was jointly chaired by Lieutenant General Michael Short, the air component commander for Allied Forces Southern Europe (AFSOUTH), and Vice Admiral Daniel Murphy, AFSOUTH's Commander of Striking and Support Forces.<sup>49</sup> The Board then passed its recommended targets up through the chain of command, first to the AFSOUTH Commander, Admiral James Ellis, and then to SACEUR Clark. Clark personally reviewed each target, to determine whether it fit the guidelines he had been given by the North Atlantic Council.<sup>50</sup>

Once Clark approved a proposed target, the political review process began. During the first weeks of the air campaign, each target had to be reviewed by both the NAC and each individual member state.

Military officers and political leaders from each of NATO's 19 members analyzed specific aim points, proposed munitions for each target, and estimated the potential for civilian casualties. Member states retained the right to veto any proposed target for any reason, and no target could be included on the Air Tasking Order (ATO) until it had received unanimous approval.<sup>51</sup> This intensive national review process severely limited the number of targets. According to Pentagon estimates, more than 80 percent of the targets struck during the first four weeks had been attacked at least once before.

<sup>48</sup>Clark testimony July 1, 1999; Cohen testimony July 20, 1999.

<sup>49</sup>Both of these positions are dual-hatted with key positions in the U.S. chain of command. Lt General Short also served as the Joint Force Air Component Commander (JFACC) within the U.S. European Command (EUCOM), while Vice Admiral Murphy served as the Commander of the U.S. Sixth Fleet. Murphy testimony to the House Armed Services Committee, Military Readiness Subcommittee, October 26, 1999.

<sup>50</sup>John Tirpak, "The First Six Weeks," *Air Force Magazine*, June 1999, pp. 27-29.

<sup>51</sup>Dana Priest and William Drozdiak, "NATO Struggles to Make Progress From the Air," *Washington Post*, April 18, 1999.

Although some of the restrikes resulted from Serbian reconstitution efforts, little damage from initial strikes, or use of multiple aim points during the attack, the statistic largely reflects the limited number of approved targets.<sup>52</sup>

After a few weeks, the North Atlantic Council decided to remove itself from this rigorous review process, believing that its guidelines to Clark about authorized target categories satisfied its requirements for political oversight.<sup>53</sup> In mid-April, the NAC approved a further expansion of the target list. The NAC did not officially approve Phase III of the operation, but instead authorized Solana to approve strikes on categories of targets that fell within Phase III.<sup>54</sup> Naumann later explained the importance of this semantic difference:

we realized that we would never get another formal decision of the NATO Council to escalate to phase three, which after all, had meant all-out air war against Yugoslavia. So the chairman of the NATO Council, Secretary General Solana, chose the procedure to tell the council, "I, as secretary general, interpret the—our discussion in that and that way, and I hope you all can go along with that." So it was stated.<sup>55</sup>

However, the process of national review remained largely unchanged. The individual governments remained extremely concerned about collateral damage, fearing that high numbers of civilian casualties could reduce public support for the operation and undermine the fragile consensus within the Alliance. Military planners analyzed the potential for civilian deaths in great detail, and assessed each target as likely to involve high, medium, or low collateral damage.<sup>56</sup> Most countries subjected the proposed targets to some form of legal review, to ensure compliance with domestic and interna-

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<sup>52</sup>Bradley Graham and John Lancaster, "Most NATO Bombing Raids Target Previously Hit Sites," *Washington Post*, April 21, 1999.

<sup>53</sup>Steven Lee Myers, "All in Favor of This Target, Say Yes, Sí, Oui, Ja," *New York Times*, April 25, 1999.

<sup>54</sup>Daalder and O'Hanlon, p. 118.

<sup>55</sup>Naumann testimony, November 3, 1999.

<sup>56</sup>Eric Schmitt, "Wrong Address of Embassy in Database," *New York Times*, May 10, 1999.

tional law.<sup>57</sup> According to Clark, “most nations had their lawyers check the targets that were actually struck by the pilots before the pilots flew. We had a couple of cases of pilots turning around in flight and saying, Oops, we just got told that this doesn’t [meet] the test of such and such—a domestic legal procedure.”<sup>58</sup>

All NATO members retained the right to veto targets, and the smaller countries occasionally exercised this right. For example, the Netherlands consistently opposed targeting the presidential palace in Belgrade, because a Rembrandt painting hung on the first floor.<sup>59</sup> Yet for the most part, the United States, United Kingdom, and France made the major decisions with input from Germany, Italy, and occasionally Greece. Secretary of State Albright held a five-way conference call with the British, French, German, and Italian foreign ministers almost every day, leading one senior administration official to refer to this grouping as a “management committee.” These calls played an important role in maintaining unity among the Alliance’s major powers, allowing the ministers to coordinate informally, outside of NATO’s institutional structure. The Italian foreign minister, Lamberto Dini, often expressed major concerns about the bombing campaign, but the other ministers reassured him that the Alliance was following the proper course and convinced him to keep supporting the operation.<sup>60</sup>

Of NATO’s 19 members, France exercised its veto power most often. France repeatedly refused to authorize targets inside Montenegro, arguing that Montenegro was much less hostile to the West than Serbia. Perhaps motivated by concerns about harming innocent civilians or keeping NATO military action proportionate with its objectives, French officials also opposed striking bridges in Belgrade, oil

<sup>57</sup>In the United States, targets that required National Command Authority (NCA) approval were reviewed by the legal counsel to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and by the DoD General Counsel. “Kosovo/Operation Allied Force After-Action Report,” p. 24.

<sup>58</sup>Clark testimony, July 1, 1999.

<sup>59</sup>This restriction led a frustrated Naumann to quip, “It isn’t a good Rembrandt.” Carla Anne Robbins, Thomas E. Ricks, and Neil King, Jr., “Milosevic’s Resolve Spawned More Unity in Alliance and a Wider Target List,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 27, 1999.

<sup>60</sup>Dana Priest, “France Balked at NATO Targets,” *Washington Post*, September 20, 1999.

refineries, television towers, and the Yugoslavian power grid. In one telling example, France did not want to authorize strikes against certain electrical transmission lines because there was a hospital nearby. French officials agreed to target those lines only after the United States shared information on a highly classified weapon that would short out the system with graphite fibers, disabling it for several hours without destroying it completely.<sup>61</sup> Lt General Short later complained that the French restrictions interfered with his ability to strike important strategic targets in Belgrade and increased the danger to his forces by leaving surface-to-air missiles and interceptor aircraft in Montenegro intact.<sup>62</sup>

### Combat Air Patrol

CAP sorties made up roughly 16 percent of all sorties flown and were flown mostly by Europeans. It seems a disproportionately large investment in combat air patrol in that the Yugoslav air force ceased to be a factor after the first week of the operation. Moreover, this amount of combat air patrol activity appears disproportionately large when compared to the proportion of CAP flown in Desert Storm, where Iraq posed a more serious air threat.

There are three reasons for this. First, the allies contributed an air force composed principally of fighters, and thus sought tasks that required fighter aircraft. However, as the campaign developed, many aircraft deployed by the allies could not fly night and adverse weather sorties, and few could deliver PGMs, limiting their roles even further. Those aircraft that could not participate in strike sorties were limited to the air superiority role, and spent most of their time flying CAP sorties. Second, the CAP mission had political significance. Flying combat air patrol gave all NATO members who sought it the opportunity to play a combat role, for which they had some capabilities. The multinational CAP effort symbolized a unified force to Serbia and provided images of NATO solidarity back home. Third, flying CAP served an important if limited military function. By flying

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<sup>61</sup>French officers also received reassurances that the hospital had other power sources available for the duration. Priest, "France Balked at NATO Targets," *Washington Post*, September 20, 1999.

<sup>62</sup>Short testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, October 21, 1999.

CAP sorties, the Europeans successfully dissuaded Milosevic from launching a surprise air attack on Italy that might have fractured the Alliance or at least influenced Italy to withdraw use of its airfields and facilities from the allied effort, thus complicating the staging and support options for NATO.

### Reconnaissance

The early phases of Operation Allied Force did not overtax allied performance or reveal particular shortcomings in reconnaissance. As Figure 2.1 indicates, the allies' large fighter element allowed the allies to fly a substantial number of sorties requiring fighter aircraft. The number of approved targets was modest and virtually all targets were fixed. These targets were listed in the Basic Encyclopedia, so the allies were familiar with the target sets and most were pre-approved. Even at the beginning of the air campaign, there were more than enough aircraft available within the coalition air fleet to attack the available targets. The pace of operations and the target types fell well within the European capabilities. The problem was

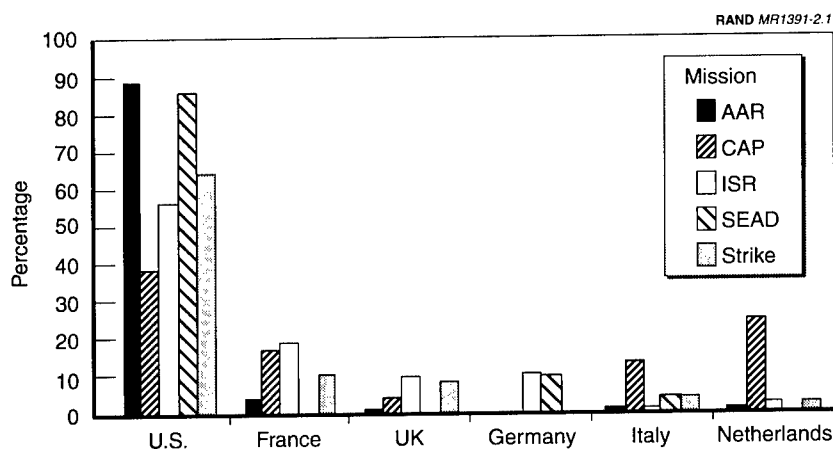


Figure 2.1—Percentage of Sorties Flown

effective attack: often the European air forces lacked the precision-guided munitions or other resources necessary to strike targets without causing unacceptable levels of civilian casualties and damage.

As the air campaign wore on, however, allied strategy began to focus on forces in the field, adopting “flex-targeting” as the tactic of choice. These operations were more demanding and beyond the reach of many of the allies, because they required targeting and surveillance capabilities like those possessed by the United States in LANTIRN (Low Altitude Navigation and Targeting Infrared at Night) and similar onboard systems, and the Joint STARS (Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System) and Rivet Joint reconnaissance and surveillance systems. In addition, many of the targets were fleeting, so a premium was put on “real-time” targeting and surveillance information. Reconnaissance systems had to be able to relay targeting data immediately to the aircraft tasked with engaging the enemy forces in the field. “Flex targeting” proved difficult in several respects. Some of the allies lacked the means to locate and engage targets promptly. For the United States, which usually provided the systems that located fleeting targets, engagement was often difficult or impossible because the enemy was comingled with civilians and target identification was not high quality.<sup>63</sup>

Unmanned aerial vehicles and drones were an important component in the surveillance and target acquisition effort to provide unambiguous target identification. Both France and Germany deployed UAVs and drones in this role. Although they flew 37 percent of all unmanned sorties, they flew less than 10 percent of all hours by unmanned craft of all types. This is attributable to the current limited flight length of European UAVs and drones.<sup>64</sup> This limited flight time prevented European unmanned systems from venturing deep into the area of operations, restricting the amount of reconnaissance and surveillance the UAVs and drones actually could perform.

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<sup>63</sup>General John P. Jumper stressed the need for high-confidence target identification and location, and the need to protect innocent civilians from inadvertent harm. See “Jumper on Air Power,” *Air Force Magazine*, July 2000 (on-line edition).

<sup>64</sup>For example, the CL-289 has a maximum endurance of 30 minutes. Kenneth Munson (ed.), *Jane's Defense Guide: Unmanned Aerial Vehicles*, Issue 13, 1999, p. 68.



## Suppression of Enemy Air Defense

The suppression of enemy air defenses proved to be one of the most nettlesome of all the OAF missions. Although USAF doctrine and the Kosovo campaign plan called for complete neutralization of the enemy's air defenses, NATO succeeded only in suppressing them temporarily, mission-by-mission. Serb tactics limited the exposure of their air defense assets and thus reduced the opportunities for allied aircraft to destroy them. As a result, allied aircrews always had to reckon with the air defense threat. Throughout the operation, substantial air assets were devoted to SEAD, leading the AFSOUTH commander, Admiral James O. Ellis, to wonder aloud whether planning to destroy future enemy air defense systems was even reasonable, or whether adapting to the need for constant suppression was more realistic.<sup>65</sup> Up to 30 percent of air assets per strike package was comprised of SEAD aircraft. Standoff and escort jamming was done solely by the United States with EA-6 Prowlers.

Nevertheless, several of the allies played important roles in the overall SEAD effort. Because the German and Italian air forces possessed the best SEAD capabilities of the non-U.S. air forces, they were called upon to help open air corridors for strike aircraft to fly through. Their ECR Tornados fired HARM missiles, forcing enemy radars to shut down and allowing allied strike aircraft to fly safely into enemy airspace. The German and Italian air forces expended a significant number of missiles. Although they flew only 8 percent of the SEAD sorties, Germany and Italy delivered over 35 percent of the munitions released in SEAD.<sup>66</sup>

Although NATO was able to carry out strike sorties in a near "one-hundred percent secure environment," the overall SEAD mission achieved mixed results at best. Serbian tactics employed during OAF to preserve the air defense system have been a fundamental part of Yugoslavian military doctrine for the last 50 years, addressing the best methods of preserving air defenses from an enemy with an overwhelming air-power advantage. At the end of the war, many of

<sup>65</sup>Admiral James O. Ellis briefing, HQ AFSOUTH, "A View From the Top" (undated after-action report briefing).

<sup>66</sup>Jürgen Höche, "Erfahrungen aus den Luftoperationen der NATO im Kosovo," *Europäische Sicherheit*, No. 2, February 2000, p. 27.

the radar systems were still operational. The Serbs paid a price for adopting this tactic, in that they often turned off their systems to avoid targeting by NATO planes. Nevertheless, allied planners remained concerned about enemy integrated air defense systems (IADS) throughout the air campaign, and dedicated almost one-third of air assets per strike package to counter the air defense threat.

### **Aerial Refueling**

Operational conditions during OAF required an unusually high level of aerial refueling capability. In the early stages of the air campaign, inclement weather caused pilots to wait for breaks in the cloud cover so their attacks could proceed, increasing loiter time and the need for tanker support. Shifting to flex-targeting also increased the demand for aerial refueling. Once flex-targeting was adopted, loiter times increased because pilots often required more time to locate and confirm their targets. As a result of a combination of these conditions, refueling sorties constituted 21 percent of all sorties flown during OAF, the highest percentage of any single mission category.

U.S. aircraft flew most of these sorties because the NATO statement of requirements process and national responses to it were too slow and unresponsive to deploy additional tankers from within the European aircraft inventory. At the peak of the operation, the United States deployed more than 170 aerial refueling tankers, as opposed to about 13 such tankers deployed by the Europeans. If future operations have similar characteristics to those found in Kosovo that increase demand for aerial refueling (such as strict ROE, narrow windows for strikes due to weather, and long flight distances and/or loiter time), there will be increased pressure on Alliance aerial refueling capabilities.

The demand for aerial refueling put considerable pressure on the U.S. tanker fleet. Table 2.3 illustrates the problem. Had Operation Allied Force occurred simultaneously with another crisis that required a large number of tankers, the United States might have been hard-pressed to provide adequate refueling capabilities to both contingencies. It would have faced a tanker deficit if the second contin-

**Table 2.3**  
**The Potential Tanker Squeeze**

USAF/USAFR/ANG tanker fleet . . . . .	547
Less 25 percent unavailable aircraft . . . . .	137
Tankers available for deployment . . . . .	410
Less those committed to OAF . . . . .	170
Tankers available for second contingency . . . . .	240
Less tankers for Desert Storm-like event . . . . .	318
Resulting tanker deficit . . . . .	-78

agency required tanker support similar to that needed in Operation Desert Storm.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, the allies would have found it extremely difficult to provide adequate refueling capabilities in such a scenario, given the number of tankers in their present inventories, their readiness level, and the limited training of some allied aircrews at in-flight refueling operations.

### Strike Operations

Allied performance in strike operations was uneven. The coalition fared best against fixed targets and generally performed poorly against mobile targets, requiring many sorties to score a kill. Although the allied air forces flew thousands of ground-attack sorties, after the cease-fire they could confirm destruction of only 93 tanks, 153 armored combat vehicles, 389 artillery pieces and mortars, and 339 other military vehicles.<sup>68</sup> The B-2 bomber performed very well, delivering 656 all-weather Joint Direct Attack Munitions with

<sup>67</sup>For example, the USAF deployed 318 tankers to support Desert Storm, not counting Marine Corps KC-130s and Navy KA-6s and S-3s. If 25 percent of the 547 tankers in the USAF, Air Force Reserve (USAFR), and Air National Guard (ANG) are unavailable, and a similar deployment of 170+ tankers took place as in OAF, only 240 tanker aircraft would be available to support a second contingency. The United States would find itself some 78 aircraft short, and might look to the Europeans to commit more of their 92 tanker aircraft to the effort.

<sup>68</sup>Press conference by General Wesley K. Clark, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, and Brigadier General John Corley, Chief, Kosovo Mission Effectiveness Assessment Team, at <http://www.eucom.mil/operations/af/nato/1999/meabriefing.htm>.

precision sufficient to damage or destroy 87 of their targets.<sup>69</sup> Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles fired from U.S. Navy ships and submarines and from the British submarine HMS Splendid struck some 85 percent of their targets.<sup>70</sup> On the other hand, some allied aircraft deployed with such limited capabilities that they were infrequently tasked to attack the more demanding flex targets.<sup>71</sup>

The allies faced several limiting factors in their attempt to carry out strike operations during Operation Allied Force. The rules of engagement, adverse weather conditions, and the presence of non-combatants reduced opportunities for effectively employing area weapons. As a result, more targets required attack with precision-guided munitions, which reduced the chances of inadvertently killing innocents or producing other unintentional damage, and limited aircrew exposure to enemy air defense fires.<sup>72</sup> However, of the 13 allied countries participating in Operation Allied Force, only the United States, United Kingdom, and France deployed aircraft that could deliver PGMs. Furthermore, some of the munitions in the allied inventories, particularly those relying on laser and electro-optical guidance, did not perform well in bad weather.

Because they lacked all-weather and night capabilities, some allies were further restricted to flying missions during the day or in good weather. Finally, as operations shifted to flex-targeting and as the Europeans flew more sorties over the Kosovo Engagement Zone, the lack of secure voice communications aboard all allied aircraft became an issue. Orders sending these aircraft to engage both pre-planned and fleeting battlefield targets had to be sent unencrypted, allowing the enemy to monitor them on open frequencies. These

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<sup>69</sup>Glenn W. Goodman, Jr., "Out of Reach: New Long-Range USAF and Navy Air-Launched Missiles Will Keep Aircrews at Safe Standoff Ranges," *Armed Forces Journal International*, July 2000, p. 34.

<sup>70</sup>Bryan Bender, "Tomahawk Achieves New Effects in Kosovo," *Jane's Defense Weekly*, July 19, 2000.

<sup>71</sup>Author's interview with USAF officials from the USAFE Studies and Analysis Center at the Warrior Preparation Center, April 20, 2000.

<sup>72</sup>Precision-guided munitions limit aircrew exposure to enemy air defenses in two ways. First, they typically require fewer sorties to destroy their targets, so their aircrews run the enemy air defense gauntlet fewer times per target. Second, many PGMs can be launched from a distance, outside the reach of some of the enemy's air defense weapons.

compromised orders sometimes allowed the targeted unit the opportunity to hide or seek cover before attacking aircraft could engage them.

Operation Allied Force reemphasized the value of PGMs. General-purpose munitions were dropped at an almost two-to-one rate over precision-guided munitions. However, precision-guided munitions accounted for 70 percent of all confirmed hits. Once the air campaign began focusing on flex-targeting, the benefits of PGMs were even more pronounced.

In the end, the allies had little conclusive evidence that they inflicted much damage on Serbian battlefield forces, and some allied officials disputed SACEUR's final assessment.<sup>73</sup> Although post-attack battle damage assessment offered a fairly clear view of damage to buildings, bridges, and similar facilities, a sound assessment of the campaign's effects on mobile targets has been more difficult.

## DISPUTED TACTICS

Despite years of multinational, cooperative planning within the Alliance, its members found it difficult to agree on a common approach during Operation Allied Force. The allies had focused their earlier cooperative efforts on direct defense of allied territory, so Operation Allied Force represented a different type of undertaking. Their disputes centered around three issues: gradualism, U.S.-only information and operations, and the use of ground forces.

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<sup>73</sup>According to General Sir Michael Jackson, who commanded the Kosovo Force (KFOR) when it entered Kosovo, the bombing destroyed only some 14 tanks, 18 armored personnel carriers, and 20 artillery pieces. Michael Evans, "General Admits NATO Exaggerated Bombing Success," *London Times*, May 11, 2000. Vice Admiral Sir Alan West echoed Jackson's skepticism about NATO air forces' effectiveness in comments before the House of Commons Select Committee on Defence. See <http://www.parliament.the.stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm199900/cmselect/cmdfence/347/0032907.htm>. The October 1999 Kosovo Strike Assessment study concluded that the bombing successfully struck 93 tanks, 153 armored personnel carriers, 339 military vehicles, and 389 mortar and artillery pieces.

## Gradualism

Operation Deliberate Force, the earlier action that culminated in the Dayton Accords for Bosnia, served as the pattern for Kosovo and Operation Allied Force. In Operation Deliberate Force, the allies were able to force Slobodan Milosevic and the Bosnian Serbs to come to terms after several weeks of sporadic air attacks. The Clinton administration had hoped the same strategy would prevail in the early days of Operation Allied Force. NATO therefore planned to begin bombing a specified number of preselected, fixed targets and gradually increase the bombing pressure over the following days. The Alliance hoped that Milosevic would conclude there was no way to resist superior air power and that he would quickly capitulate, agreeing to halt the ethnic cleansing and to withdraw from Kosovo as specified at Rambouillet.

Although the idea of a short air campaign was put forth and strongly supported by the U.S. government, it provided a strategy that was amenable to European allies who were already skeptical of being dragged into an all-out air campaign where objectives were ill defined. The United States expected that air attacks lasting several days would convince Milosevic to accept NATO's demands. It was much easier to reach a consensus with the Europeans about a short campaign than to convince them to sign on for a prolonged air war. Several Alliance members lacked domestic support for an offensive operation in Kosovo. In Greece, domestic opposition to a NATO operation ran as high as 90 percent, and the Italian government feared that internal divisions over the operation could shatter its ruling coalition. More important, many in the Alliance apprehensively viewed Germany's Red-Green coalition as a wild card in terms of maintaining a cohesive front against Milosevic. The Schröder government was, at the time, not on *terra firma* domestically, and there was some question if it would survive the summer.<sup>74</sup> The United States therefore emphasized a short-duration air campaign with its

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<sup>74</sup>The German Greens found themselves in a difficult situation, forced to choose between their slogans "no more war" and "no more genocide." As Operation Allied Force commenced, a Green party spokesperson noted that "There is no alternative [to air strikes] but it is a situation that is enormously difficult". "Majority of Greens Support NATO Air Strikes on Serbia," FBIS-WEU-1999-0324, March 24, 1999.

allies, to prevent fissures from developing within European domestic coalitions.

The Clinton administration assumed that a short bombing campaign would force Milosevic to capitulate, just as he had done in Bosnia during the summer of 1995. However, this assumption failed to account for two crucial differences between Bosnia and Kosovo. First, Operation Deliberate Force enjoyed additional pressure from a successful Croatian-Muslim federation counteroffensive against Bosnian Serb forces that picked up momentum during the bombing campaign. Milosevic saw his vision of a Greater Serbia growing more vulnerable by the day, and apparently calculated that it was time to cut his losses on the battlefield and secure a cease-fire with his territorial gains intact, rather than rely on the Bosnian Serbs—already exhausted and depleted—to halt the enemy counteroffensive.<sup>75</sup> Milosevic was under no such pressures at the beginning of Operation Allied Force. He was bargaining from a stronger position this time—his army was in firm control of Kosovar territory and the KLA posed a minimal threat to his forces.

Second, Milosevic presumably could leave the Bosnian Serbs on their own without fearing that he would lose his domestic power base. Abandoning the Bosnian Serbs might be unpopular, but it was unlikely to provoke the type of domestic opposition that would threaten the survival of his regime. Kosovo, by contrast, possessed special meaning for the Serbs. Milosevic had the backing of the Serbian people in his defiant stand to protect territory that was regarded as sacred in Serb tradition, and that comprised an integral part of the Yugoslav federation. Furthermore, Serbian delegates representing Kosovo constituted a substantial part of Milosevic's support in Parliament. Milosevic probably calculated that he could not abandon Kosovo without risking his claim to power, and possibly his life.

The effects of the gradualist approach were soon evident. The allies assumed that Operation Allied Force would proceed just as had Operation Deliberate Force, and so they planned for only a few days of bombing. When this strategy failed to coerce Milosevic into ca-

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<sup>75</sup>Daalder has argued that Milosevic was already committed to a diplomatic solution in Bosnia by the time that Operation Deliberate Force commenced. See Daalder and O'Hanlon, p. 93.

pitulating, the allies were caught without options beyond escalating, widening, and extending the air campaign. Yet the allies remained reluctant to approve targets that might have more coercive value, and they disagreed about whether the air attacks should focus on infrastructure or fielded forces.

Although the approach taken in Operation Allied Force produced a rather tentative start to military operations, by the third week the Alliance began to fly a significant number of sorties, as weather and capabilities permitted. That said, the very nature of Operation Allied Force limited the Alliance's ability to prosecute an overwhelming force-type operation. OAF was a military campaign constrained by the large number of participants, challenging weather and terrain, and, perhaps most of all as the campaign rolled on, a dearth of targets that had been approved for attack. The resulting gradualist approach might not have been the most militarily efficient means of challenging Milosevic, but given the limited consensus for the use of force, it was probably the only viable approach.

### **U.S.-Only Information and Operations**

Throughout Operation Allied Force, the United States remained extremely cautious about sharing sensitive information with its NATO allies. U.S. officials understood that coalition operations are more likely to leak information than unilateral operations, because they require so much communication and coordination among participating governments. They therefore decided that information about some of the most sensitive operations would remain in U.S.-only channels. Operation Allied Force therefore involved two separate Air Tasking Orders (ATOs). The NATO ATO, which was distributed to all Alliance members, listed sorties to be flown by European aircraft and most nonstealthy U.S. aircraft. A separate, U.S.-only ATO tasked the sorties to be flown by B-2 bombers and F-117 fighters, support elements for all strike packages, and U.S. Tomahawk and CALCM cruise missiles to strike selected targets. This second ATO was distributed only to U.S. officials to ensure maximum secrecy about the advanced weapons. This arrangement inevitably caused problems, because the ATO is in principle a comprehensive document containing information about every sortie being flown on a given day. General Short later acknowledged that the two separate ATOs led to confu-



sion when U.S. aircraft suddenly showed up on NATO radar screens with no advance warning.<sup>76</sup>

The United States also kept targeting data to itself as long as possible. As Vice Admiral Murphy later recalled,

The target lists were not made available to NATO until the day of planning required . . . master-target files was [sic] retained in U.S.-only channels and then shared with selected allies, as necessary for consultation. But this was a reflection of the very real concern that all the senior commanders had, that we didn't have an airtight security system within some area of the NATO operation.<sup>77</sup>

Similar problems emerged in other areas. The United States classified its battle damage assessments at levels that limited their releasability, and classification issues prevented the United States from integrating its deception operations with the other NATO allies.<sup>78</sup>

Even when the United States decided to share information with its allies, the process of clearing and distributing that information did not flow smoothly. Delays and restrictions consistently hindered this process, which made it hard for the NATO allies to have a full operational picture. One military officer described this process as "cumbersome . . . we were unable to get timely intelligence to our allies, particularly the British." He went on to note that these delays were largely caused by bureaucratic procedures for changing a classification from "U.S. Secret" to "NATO Secret."<sup>79</sup>

One report claimed that the United States deliberately excluded France from accessing NATO's top secret plans, in order to reduce the likelihood of leaks to Belgrade. In 1998, a French officer at NATO headquarters had been arrested for allegedly leaking information about the Alliance's plans in Kosovo, and a few other French officers

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<sup>76</sup>John Tirpak, "Short's View of the Air Campaign," *Air Force Magazine*, September 1999, pp. 43–47.

<sup>77</sup>Murphy testimony to the House Armed Services Committee, Military Readiness Subcommittee, October 26, 1999.

<sup>78</sup>"Kosovo/Operation Allied Force After-Action Report," pp. 50–51.

<sup>79</sup>Rowan Scarborough, "Kosovo Target Data Stalled in Transit," *Washington Times*, July 28, 1999.

had been accused of similar offenses in the past. This report said that a Clinton administration official acknowledged that the United States and the United Kingdom often reached decisions without consulting France, in order to reduce the chance of leaks.<sup>80</sup> France remained sensitive to these charges and perceptions of being an unreliable partner. In November 1999, the French Ministry of Defense released a report on lessons learned from Kosovo, which chided the United States for failing to fully cooperate with its Alliance partners. The report states that "The conclusion cannot be avoided that part of the military operations were conducted by the United States outside the strict framework of NATO and its procedures." When French Minister of Defense Alain Richard presented this report during a press conference, he emphasized that France was not the only Alliance member that did not entirely subordinate its military to the Alliance's integrated command.<sup>81</sup>

### Role of Ground Forces

When Operation Allied Force began in March 1999, the ground force option was explicitly ruled out. Alliance decisionmakers stood by the decision they had reached the previous October, when they agreed that any campaign against Yugoslavia should rely solely on air power. President Clinton expressed this intention in the clearest possible terms in his televised address when the operation commenced. Other NATO officials reaffirmed this intention throughout the first weeks of the bombing campaign, including Secretary General Solana's declaration that "We have not prepared for a force on the ground."<sup>82</sup> And in congressional testimony on April 15, General Shelton reported that NATO officials had explicitly directed Clark not to commence planning for a ground operation in Kosovo.<sup>83</sup>

Why did NATO explicitly remove the ground-force option from consideration? The Clinton administration remained extremely sensitive

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<sup>80</sup>Hugo Gordon, "France Kept in Dark by Allies," *London Daily Telegraph*, April 9, 1999.

<sup>81</sup>Craig R. Whitney, "U.S. Military Acted Outside NATO Framework During Kosovo Conflict, France Says," *New York Times*, November 11, 1999.

<sup>82</sup>Craig Whitney, "For NATO, Doubts Lag," *New York Times*, March 31, 1999.

<sup>83</sup>Shelton testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, April 15, 1999.

to the possibility of casualties and faced strong Congressional opposition to the possible use of ground troops. While these factors undoubtedly explain most of the administration's reluctance to support the use of ground troops,<sup>84</sup> the administration was also aware of the domestic politics of the other NATO members. For example, a ground invasion would require public support in Greece, because the best way to transport the ground troops and their equipment to Kosovo would be through the Greek port of Thessaloniki.<sup>85</sup> Yet Greek public opinion polls revealed more than 90 percent opposition to the air campaign, and the Greek Orthodox Church actively encouraged public protests against NATO. The Greek government found itself in a precarious position, trying to appear responsive to public opinion while abiding by its alliance commitments.<sup>86</sup> It believed that this tricky balance would be shattered and the government would fall from power if NATO suggested the possibility of a ground war.<sup>87</sup>

Germany shared similar concerns about the stability of its government, a coalition between the Social Democratic Party and the Green

<sup>84</sup>There is some evidence that the American public would have been willing to support the use of ground forces in Kosovo, although that support might have withered in the face of casualties. A poll taken during the first week of April showed that 55 percent of those polled would support deploying ground troops in Kosovo, and 68 percent said that air strikes alone would not be able to achieve NATO's goals and that a ground invasion would be necessary. Dan Balz, "U.S. Consensus Grows to Send Ground Troops," *Washington Post*, April 6, 1999.

<sup>85</sup>During Operation Allied Force, NATO did transport much of its equipment and personnel through Thessaloniki. However, these assets were destined for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), to be part of an eventual peacekeeping operation after the conflict ended. Greece repeated throughout the operation that it would not allow any NATO ground forces to transit through Thessaloniki. "Spokesman Says 'No Chance' of Greek Troops in Kosovo," in FBIS-WEU-1999-0402, April 2, 1999; "Greek Defense Minister on Kosovo Strikes," in FBIS-WEU-1999-0404, April 4, 1999.

<sup>86</sup>According to one Greek poll, 96.2 percent of people surveyed disapproved of NATO's bombing campaign, but 51.4 percent approved of the way that the government was handling the crisis. The Greek government constantly worried that this approval rating would fall, as people realized that the government was implicitly supporting the NATO operation. "Greek Poll Claims 96.2 Percent Oppose NATO Strikes," in FBIS-WEU-1999-0417, April 17, 1999.

<sup>87</sup>Alan Cowell, "It's a Wonder This Alliance Is Unified," *New York Times*, April 25, 1999; Tyler Marshall, "Rethinking the Unthinkable: Waging a Ground War in Kosovo," *Los Angeles Times*, 28 May 1999.

Party—the first in the country's history. The German Greens remained bitterly divided over the air war in Kosovo, and German officials feared that considering a ground force would shatter the governmental coalition. Other states also expressed fears that their governments could fall, or that their domestic position would be greatly weakened, if, in the words of one reporter, "NATO signaled *even a possibility* of invading Yugoslavia with ground troops."<sup>88</sup> To maintain an already fragile consensus within the Alliance, NATO announced that it had no intention of fighting a ground war in Kosovo.

NATO officials understood that announcing such a policy would have an adverse effect on the military efficiency of the campaign. Because the Serbs knew that NATO did not intend to fight a ground war, they dispersed and protected their forces instead of massing them around avenues of approach into Kosovo—making them much harder to target and destroy from the air.<sup>89</sup> Once the air war started, NATO officials understood that reopening the ground-war debate could jeopardize the entire operation by causing many of the allies to rethink their commitment to *any* form of military intervention in Kosovo.<sup>90</sup> Given the level of political disagreement within the Alliance, senior officials decided that the air campaign would get the strongest support if a ground war were explicitly removed from consideration. In the words of Secretary Cohen,

there was no consensus within NATO to put a land campaign together. . . [it] would have shifted the focus from the consensus that did exist for the support of the air campaign with all 19 countries supporting it to a fractious debate on the land campaign itself . . . ordinarily you would say yes, we should have every option on the table. And in this particular case the practical problem we found ourselves confronting is there was no support for that within the Alliance itself.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>88</sup>Barton Gellman, "Future of NATO May Depend on Resolving Strategic Differences," *Washington Post*, April 25, 1999. Emphasis added.

<sup>89</sup>Michael R. Gordon with Eric Schmitt, "Allies Seek, Serbs Hide," *New York Times*, April 7, 1999; Jumper testimony, October 26, 1999; Naumann testimony, November 3, 1999.

<sup>90</sup>Cohen testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, April 15, 1999.

<sup>91</sup>Cohen testimony, July 20, 1999.

Although the military leaders did not like removing the ground-force option, they understood the political realities that constrained the Alliance. As General Shelton explained,

from a military perspective, we never like to see an option taken off the table too early on or to telegraph to an adversary or a potential adversary what our plan is or even what our intent might be for some future operation. However, having said that, I think that the only option worse than not having an option at all is to have an option that would be used in a threat manner which did not have the political consensus to move forward with it.<sup>92</sup>

However, the NATO allies soon confronted a painful reality: the air war was dragging on much longer than anticipated, with no end in sight. The bombing raids did some damage to Serbian forces, but did not destroy their capability to conduct the “cleansing” campaign against the Kosovar Albanians. As the first week of Operation Allied Force turned into the second week, and the second week turned into the third week, talk of a ground war resurfaced. The first hint that NATO might reconsider its position on ground forces came in mid-April, when several senior administration officials publicly stated that NATO could quickly update its plans for a ground invasion if necessary.<sup>93</sup> As the Washington summit drew nearer, British and French officials pressed the United States—at least in their public statements—to seriously consider a ground option. On April 21, two days before the summit began, the NATO allies held a meeting to discuss whether they should reconsider the possibility of a ground invasion.<sup>94</sup> Although the allies remained reluctant to involve ground forces, they apparently reached some sort of consensus that the Alliance should reevaluate its contingency plans. Solana announced after this meeting that he had authorized NATO’s military staff to

<sup>92</sup>Shelton testimony, October 14, 1999.

<sup>93</sup>Secretary of Defense Cohen, White House Chief of Staff John Podesta, and Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott all emphasized this point during separate interviews on the same day. Joyce Howard Price, “NATO Has Ground Plan for Kosovo,” *Washington Times*, April 12, 1999.

<sup>94</sup>Thomas Ricks and Carla Anne Robbins, “NATO to Reconsider Use of Ground Troops in Kosovo; Allies Weigh Raising Pressure,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 21, 1999.

update their plans for a ground invasion of Kosovo,<sup>95</sup> but quickly added that NATO was still a long way from reaching a consensus on executing any of these plans.<sup>96</sup> U.S. officials echoed Solana's cautionary statements, saying that the White House still opposed any ground invasion, but supported updating the plans as a "prudent measure."<sup>97</sup>

Between April 23 and 25, the NATO members convened in Washington for a summit meeting marking the Alliance's 50th anniversary. They endeavored to present an image of allied solidarity, with public statements that repeatedly emphasized NATO's commitment to Operation Allied Force. The Alliance's official statement on Kosovo condemned the ethnic cleansing campaign in harsh terms and stated that NATO would refuse to compromise on the conditions that must be met for the bombing to stop.<sup>98</sup> These predictable official statements obscured the divisions among the 19 allies. Disagreements about the use of ground troops were so severe that the issue was left off the formal agenda altogether.<sup>99</sup> The NATO delegations from Greece and Italy, facing strong domestic opposition to the air war, generally supported NATO during public sessions and official statements, but then criticized the Alliance when speaking to reporters from their own countries.<sup>100</sup>

After the Washington summit, the ground-force debate quieted down for a couple of weeks. Military planners estimated that a decision to use ground forces would have to be made no later than June. If NATO wanted to finish a ground invasion before the snow started

<sup>95</sup>One report published after the war stated that Solana had previously authorized Clark to secretly discuss ground-force options with U.S. and British officers at NATO headquarters, even though the NAC had not approved any ground-force planning. Dana Priest, "The Decisive Battle that Never Was," *Washington Post*, September 19, 1999.

<sup>96</sup>Thomas Lippman and Bradley Graham, "NATO Chief Asks Review of Invasion Planning," *Washington Post*, April 22, 1999.

<sup>97</sup>Michael R. Gordon and Craig R. Whitney, "2 Allies Press U.S. to Weigh the Use of Ground Forces," *New York Times*, April 22, 1999.

<sup>98</sup>"Statement on Kosovo," NATO Press Release S-1(99)62, April 23, 1999.

<sup>99</sup>"Where NATO Members Stand," *London Times*, April 22, 1999; "One NATO, Many Fish to Fry," *New York Times*, April 25, 1999.

<sup>100</sup>R. W. Apple, Jr., "Clinton's Positive Thinking: The NATO Alliance Is Alive and Kicking," *New York Times*, April 26, 1999.

falling in early October, Alliance forces would have to enter Kosovo between July 15 and August 1.<sup>101</sup> Because it would take at least a month to organize, train, and deploy a massive intervention force, a decision to invade would have to be made by mid-June at the latest.<sup>102</sup> In late May, senior NATO officials publicly acknowledged that the Alliance had only three weeks left to decide whether to authorize preparations for an invasion force in order to keep that option viable.<sup>103</sup>

As time started to run out, the United Kingdom revived the ground-war debate. On May 17, British Foreign Minister Robin Cook again proposed that NATO consider sending ground troops into Kosovo if a peace agreement had not been reached. The British argued that air strikes alone might not compel Milosevic to surrender, but that they might weaken Yugoslav ground forces to the point where a land attack could be conducted without major organized resistance. In substance, this plan did not differ from the one that the United Kingdom and France supported before the Washington summit. But this time, the British emphasized that time was running out for a land attack, and stressed the need to get the refugees home before winter.<sup>104</sup>

American officials reacted cautiously to these British statements. President Clinton met with his senior national security advisors for two hours in the evening of May 17, during which they confronted the possibility that a ground invasion might be the only way to achieve NATO's objectives in Yugoslavia. The following day, Clinton told reporters that "I and everyone else have always said that we intend to see our objectives achieved and that we have not and will not take any objective off the table." Clinton went on to emphasize that U.S. policy had not changed and that NATO should stick with its current strategy, but this statement marked the first time that any

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<sup>101</sup> Carla Anne Robbins and Thomas E. Ricks, "Time Is Fast Running Out If Invasion Is to Remain Option Before Winter," *Wall Street Journal*, May 21, 1999.

<sup>102</sup> Some military observers argued that even mid-May was too late for a decision. See Lewis MacKenzie, "Militarily, It's Winter," *Washington Post*, May 23, 1999.

<sup>103</sup> Eric Schmitt and Michael R. Gordon, "Time Running Out for NATO to Plan a Kosovo Invasion," *New York Times*, May 23, 1999.

<sup>104</sup> Eric Schmitt and Michael R. Gordon, "British Pressing Partners to Deploy Ground Troops," *New York Times*, May 18, 1999.

American official had suggested even the possibility of a ground war in Kosovo.<sup>105</sup> Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon acknowledged that "everybody is looking at the calendar and looking at what must be done to get the refugees back home" by winter, and left open the possibility of a ground invasion by stating that "No one can guarantee at this stage that the air campaign will produce all of the objectives by the fall."<sup>106</sup>

Aside from the United Kingdom, none of the allies responded positively to the prospect of a ground war. The French and Canadian foreign ministers, for example, responded that NATO's policy of diplomacy combined with air strikes remained firmly in place. Italy and Greece repeated their calls for a bombing moratorium, to give Milosevic an incentive to negotiate and the Security Council enough time to consider a draft resolution for a peace settlement. Germany had the strongest response of all, as Chancellor Gerhard Schröder announced that he would use his veto power to block NATO from fighting a ground war in Kosovo. Schröder stated that "the strategy of an Alliance can only be changed if all the parties involved agree on it. I am against any change of NATO strategy." American diplomats stressed that the strong German statements were directed primarily at a domestic audience to prevent the collapse of the Red-Green coalition government. Yet these statements clearly signaled the lack of consensus within NATO on this important issue.<sup>107</sup>

Meanwhile, NATO's military staff continued to develop operational plans for a ground invasion. Clark had appointed a secret planning team at NATO headquarters to prepare ground options; a preliminary plan was generated by the middle of May. The team used existing British operational plans as a starting point—the Ministry of Defence had generated six different invasion options during the pre-

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<sup>105</sup>The contradictory headlines from the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* coverage of this conference reflect the ambiguous nature of the President's statements. John F. Harris, "Clinton Says He Might Send Ground Troops," *Washington Post*, May 19, 1999; Katharine Q. Seelye, "Clinton Resists Renewed Calls for Ground Troops in Kosovo," *New York Times*, May 19, 1999.

<sup>106</sup>Jane Perlez, "Clinton Is Pushing for Peace Keepers at Kosovo Border," *New York Times*, May 22, 1999.

<sup>107</sup>Eric Schmitt, "Germany's Leader Pledges to Block Combat on the Ground," *New York Times*, May 20, 1999; Roger Cohen, "Schröder's Blunt 'No' to Ground Troops in Kosovo Reflects Depth of German Sensitivities," *New York Times*, May 20, 1999.



vious year. The most extensive of these options, code-named Plan Bravo, would have required more than 300,000 troops to invade Serbia and go all the way to Belgrade. The NATO team ultimately agreed on a less-intensive invasion plan that called for 175,000 troops to invade Kosovo from the south, moving north through a single road in Albania. This plan became known as the B-minus option, indicating that it would be less intensive than a full invasion of Belgrade. The planners estimated that the NATO forces could secure Kosovo within six weeks, thus enabling the operation to achieve its objectives before the onset of winter.<sup>108</sup> On May 19, Clark briefed the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) on the details of the B-minus plan. The JCS remained less than enthusiastic about the plan, expressing doubts about its feasibility and, in the words of one reporter, giving Clark "the vague, kiss-of-death suggestion to study the issue some more."<sup>109</sup>

After this cool reception, Clark shifted his energy toward strengthening the preparations for a possible peacekeeping force in Kosovo. Although this force, generally referred to as KFOR, would be deployed only after Milosevic agreed to a peace settlement, Clark and other NATO staffers knew that a strengthened KFOR would include key elements of the B-minus plan. Because the United States and the other NATO allies were not prepared to approve preparations for the B-minus plan, the only way to keep a ground option alive would be to include these key elements as part of the KFOR preparations. Clark spent several days trying to convince the NATO allies that any peacekeeping force in Kosovo would require between 45,000 and 50,000 troops—roughly double the number that NATO originally anticipated. Solana sent a confidential note to the NATO delegates explaining that Macedonia had agreed to allow up to 30,000 troops on its soil, up from the 16,000 troops it originally allowed. The rest of the KFOR troops would operate from staging grounds in Bulgaria and possibly Albania. Within days, the allies agreed to send the proposal for an enhanced KFOR to the North Atlantic Council, which in turn approved it. The 19 members received a general plan for the strengthened KFOR, and they were told that they had until 5:00 pm

<sup>108</sup>Patrick Wintour and Peter Beaumont, "Revealed: The Secret Plan to Invade Kosovo," *London Sunday Observer*, July 18, 1999; Priest, September 19, 1999.

<sup>109</sup>Priest, September 19, 1999.

on May 25 to object to the plan or attach conditions to their support. When the deadline passed without objections or conditions, the plan was considered to have been approved.<sup>110</sup>

NATO's political leaders understood that the decision to strengthen KFOR allowed the Alliance to keep the possibility of a ground invasion alive without having to reach a formal agreement on the B-minus plan. Even though they still lacked a consensus in favor of a ground invasion, they felt that it was prudent to keep their options open as the air war dragged on. Clark had explicitly told the NATO delegates that a strengthened KFOR could facilitate combat preparations, and NATO officials publicly acknowledged that some of the KFOR forces could play a combat role if the Alliance later decided to approve the ground-invasion plan.<sup>111</sup> British Air Marshal Sir John Day, the deputy Chief of the Defence Staff, later explained this decision as follows:

The decision to increase K-For Plus was militarily right in itself, but it was also a form of heavy breathing on Milosevic and a subtle way of moving to B Minus whilst keeping the coalition together. The move also had the effect of shortening our timelines for B Minus. It is true that the forces that were being prepared for K-For Plus were the core elements of what would have then become B Minus, the full ground invasion.<sup>112</sup>

This decision did not buy NATO as much time as it would have liked. On May 27, the defense ministers from the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Italy met in Bonn to discuss what a ground invasion of Kosovo would involve. British Defence Minister George Robertson, who had urged the five ministers to gather for this meeting, wanted his colleagues to start immediate preparations for a ground invasion. After more than six hours of debate, the ministers agreed that they would have to decide whether to prepare to execute

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<sup>110</sup>Michael R. Gordon, "NATO Moves Ahead on a Kosovo Force of 50,000 Troops," *New York Times*, May 26, 1999; Peter Beaumont and Patrick Wintour, "Leaks in NATO—and Plan Bravo Minus," *London Sunday Observer*, July 18, 1999.

<sup>111</sup>Gordon, May 26, 1999.

<sup>112</sup>Beaumont and Wintour, July 18, 1999.

the B-minus plan within a few days.<sup>113</sup> This decision marked the first time that they acknowledged that a final choice would have to be made, and that it would have to be made quickly.

Clark traveled to Washington in late May, hoping to secure approval to commence preparations for a ground-force deployment no later than June 1. Administration officials, however, wanted to delay a decision as long as possible, hoping that intensified air strikes and suddenly improved weather would convince Milosevic to accept a peace agreement. During a long phone conversation, Clark and National Security Advisor Sandy Berger found a way to push the deadline for a final decision back to June 10. The main access road from Albania to Kosovo could not support the type of heavy deployment that an invasion would require, so Clark ordered his military engineers to reinforce the road. NATO officially announced that it was repairing the road for refugee travel, but U.S., German, and Italian engineers were directed to make the road strong enough to support Bradley fighting vehicles and the heavier tanks and artillery that a ground invasion would require. Germany and Britain also readied pontoon bridges and other forms of equipment that could allow armored forces to deploy over water.<sup>114</sup>

On June 2, Berger convened a meeting of the Clinton administration's top national security officials to discuss ways in which NATO could win the war. They examined several ground options that fell short of the B-minus plan, including creating safe areas for the refugees inside Kosovo. Shelton stated that the JCS still did not support a ground invasion, but would not commit too few U.S. troops to a limited goal. By the end of the meeting, the officials agreed that winning the war had become the paramount U.S. objective—more important than maintaining Alliance cohesion and keeping the Russians on board.<sup>115</sup> The United States announced it was prepared to consider a unilateral ground invasion if NATO could not reach a consensus on this option. As Berger stated on June 2, "A consensus

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<sup>113</sup>Steven Lee Myers, "Cohen and Other Ministers Size Up Possible Ground Force," *New York Times*, May 29, 1999; Priest, September 19, 1999.

<sup>114</sup>Priest, September 19, 1999.

<sup>115</sup>Steven Erlanger, "With Milosevic Unyielding on Kosovo, NATO Moved Towards Invasion," *New York Times*, November 7, 1999.

within NATO is valuable, but it is not an absolute requirement." Berger wrote a memo to the president that evening, arguing that a ground invasion was the only viable option left.<sup>116</sup>

On June 3, Clinton was scheduled to meet with all four Chiefs of Staff—his first meeting with the full JCS since the bombing started—to discuss ground-force options. Pentagon officials asked Clark not to come to the meeting, since his position advocating an invasion force was already well known throughout the administration.<sup>117</sup> This meeting never took place, because Milosevic announced on June 3 that he would accept NATO's terms to end the bombing. Finland's President Martti Ahtisaari and Russian envoy Victor Chernomyrdin had presented Milosevic with a detailed plan on June 2, so that the terms of the settlement would be clearly understood.<sup>118</sup> On the morning of June 3, the envoys met with Milosevic and his entourage once again. After asking several questions about the UN role in KFOR and the status of the Rambouillet agreement, Milosevic announced his intention to comply with NATO's terms.<sup>119</sup> This agreement meant that NATO could avoid the potentially difficult decision to prepare an invasion force.

## CONCLUSIONS

At least four points stand out in this summary of Operation Allied Force. First, alliance politics made the operation possible. It also imposed limitations, as noted earlier in this chapter, but this was an inevitable feature of coalition warfare. The Clinton administration ruled out the possibility of a unilateral U.S. operation because NATO allies had troops on the ground elsewhere in the region, so the operation had to be multinational in nature. Intra-alliance political consultations were therefore essential to produce *any* military action in Kosovo.

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<sup>116</sup>Daalder and O'Hanlon, pp. 158–160 and 325.

<sup>117</sup>Jane Perlez, "Clinton and the Joint Chiefs to Discuss Ground Invasion," *New York Times*, June 2, 1999.

<sup>118</sup>For details of the Chernomyrdin-Ahtisaari meetings, see Daalder and O'Hanlon, pp. 169–174.

<sup>119</sup>William Drozdiak and Anne Swardson, "Diplomatic, Military Offensive Force Belgrade's Hand," *Washington Post*, June 4, 1999.

Second, with no immediate threat to allied territory or classical interests to serve as a *causus belli*, the consensus for action was fragile. This fragility imposed certain limitations on the type, intensity, and scope of military action, such as approving a relatively small number of targets and imposing fairly restrictive rules of engagement. Future multinational operations are likely to face similar types of restrictions, especially when the objectives are very limited.

Third, the public debate over whether to employ ground forces may have been a bluff, but it was an important bluff. None of the NATO members were eager to deploy forces, although the British were rhetorically aggressive in talking through the rationale for a ground component before winter returned. Some of the allies—the Greeks and probably the Germans—would have faced serious domestic resistance to any involvement in a ground operation. Talking through the unpleasant prospects of a ground operation may have helped to sustain the consensus to continue the air campaign, by reinforcing a shared belief that introducing ground forces would involve even more difficult and unpleasant issues.

Fourth, although alliance and U.S. press releases during the operation recognized the contributions of all participating air forces, the truth was that the United States was shouldering a disproportionately large share of the effort. The Europeans certainly made some important contributions to combat operations: Germany and Italy played a major role in the SEAD campaign, for example, and the British and French joined the United States in delivering PGMs. Nevertheless, most of the European allies generally lacked the capabilities that would let them operate effectively within the scope of NATO's consensus.

Operation Allied Force marked only the second occasion in which NATO ventured beyond its own borders to conduct extended combat operations, so it is not surprising that many of the participating states are trying to capture the lessons to be learned from Kosovo. This chapter draws on records of parliamentary testimony, official reports, and interviews with defense and government officials to summarize the assessment of Operation Allied Force and the principal lessons garnered from the campaign as viewed from London, Paris, Berlin, the Hague, Rome, and Washington. The summary focuses on four main questions: (1) What was the overall evaluation of the campaign? (2) What was the quality of interoperability among the participating forces? (3) To what degree does OAF serve as a model for future allied operations? (4) What national defense programs revealed shortcomings during OAF? The chapter concludes by highlighting those issues on which European assessments differ significantly from those of the United States.

### **OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE CAMPAIGN**

The European allies generally agree that Operation Allied Force was a successful military campaign. The United Kingdom and France have stated this conclusion in official documents that summarize the lessons learned from the operation. The other allies, including Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands, do not intend to release all official report on OAF, but political and military leaders have made public statements that support this conclusion. Table 3.1 summarizes the status of formal after-action and similar reports.

**Table 3.1**  
**European After-Action Reports**

Country	Lessons Learned Reports by Ministries of Defense	Other Reports Addressing Kosovo-Related Issues
France	<i>Les Enseignements du Kosovo</i> , Ministère de la Defense, November 1999	1994 White Paper on Defense 2015 Defense Model Military Program Law 1997–2002 30-Year Projected Plan (p. 30)
United Kingdom	<i>Kosovo: Lessons Learned from the Crisis</i> , Ministry of Defence, June 2000 <i>Kosovo: An Account of the Crisis: Initial Lessons Learned</i> , Ministry of Defence, October 1999	Defence White Paper 1999, Ministry of Defence Defence Committee, House of Commons, <i>Lessons of Kosovo</i> : 15 and 22 March 2000, 10 and 17 May 2000, 7 and 21 June 2000 <i>Kosovo: The Financial Management of Military Operations</i> , National Audit Office, June 2000
Germany	No official report	<i>Commission on Mutual Security and the Future of the Bundeswehr</i> , May 23, 2000
Italy	No official report	
Netherlands	No official report	Summary of the Defense White Paper 2000, November 29, 1999
United States	<i>After-Action Reviews: Overview</i> , DoD, October 1999 <i>Kosovo/ Operation Allied Force After-Action Report</i> , DoD, January 31, 2000 <i>Air War Over Serbia</i> , U.S. Air Force, October 1999	Congressional testimony Senate Armed Services Committee House Armed Services Committee, Fall 1999

The European allies were not necessarily pleased with all aspects of the operation, as will be discussed below, but they generally agree that Operation Allied Force successfully achieved its objectives.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>For statements to this effect, see *Kosovo: Lessons Learned from the Crisis*, "Introduction"; United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, Report by the Comptroller and

After 78 days, Slobodan Milosevic stopped the violence against the Kosovar Albanians and allowed a NATO-led peacekeeping force into Kosovo. In response to the question of how much damage was done to targets valued by the Serb leadership, the official British lessons learned report simply states, "The short answer is 'enough'."<sup>2</sup>

Despite this general assessment, the European allies believe that Operation Allied Force suffered from serious limitations that must be addressed. In particular, they are concerned about the extent to which the United States dominated the operation. The United States contributed most of the aircraft and flew most of the sorties during the operation, because it possessed capabilities that the European allies simply did not have. The United States delivered most of the precision weaponry and provided all-weather capabilities and critical support functions because the Europeans could not provide these capabilities themselves. This operational dominance translated into strategic and political dominance as well. Because the United States provided the vast majority of the assets for the operation, it dictated the ways in which they would be used. Some of the European allies, including France and the Netherlands, believe that they were left out of crucial decision processes and that information-sharing suffered as a result. They emphasize that they do not want to be excluded from these types of decisions in future operations.

## QUALITY OF INTEROPERABILITY

Operation Allied Force benefited greatly from almost 50 years of NATO training, exercises, and interoperability standards. These common experiences allowed NATO forces to identify and resolve some major interoperability challenges long before they were challenged in an actual operation. Nevertheless, Operation Allied Force revealed that serious interoperability problems remain. The most glaring shortcoming was the lack of interoperable secure communi-

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Auditor General, and "Kosovo: The Financial Management of Military Operations," Executive Summary, Paragraph 8.

<sup>2</sup>*Kosovo: "Lessons Learned from the Crisis,"* Chapter 7.15. For a similar statement, see comments by Sir Charles Guthrie, testimony before the House of Commons Defence Committee, March 15, 2000, available at <http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm199900/cmselect/cmdfence/347/0031501.htm>, Question 1.



cations, but other interoperability problems manifested themselves as well.

### Secure Communications

The most severe challenge was the lack of interoperable, high-volume secure communications, which affected every aspect of the operation. European secure communications systems use different technology than do U.S. systems, and they proved to be incompatible during the operation. For example, the Royal Air Force (RAF) bases its secure communications system on frequency-hopping technology, which is not compatible with U.S. secure systems. The lack of secure communications was not solely an Alliance problem: many national contingents, including the United Kingdom and United States, lacked secure links for joint communications among their service branches. The lack of secure communications caused a wide range of problems at every level of the conflict.

At the strategic level, the lack of secure communications hampered NATO's ability to share information and process intelligence. This problem often interfered with the ability of the political and military authorities to consult with each other and to monitor the progress of the operation. In addition, the United States did not release the ATO for some key assets, which angered the allies. The official French lessons-learned document emphasizes this point repeatedly, and the British lessons learned document recommends ensuring "maximum possible transparency with our Allies to ensure personnel working together in a military operation have the same access to intelligence of importance and relevance to the operation."<sup>3</sup>

At the operational level, headquarters units did not have secure telephone lines, although NATO does have a communications system for secret data, called the Limited Operational Capability for Europe (LOCE). ATOs can be transmitted through the LOCE, but, as its name implies, its capacity is limited to 64 kilobits per second. This system was overwhelmed by the volume of information in Operation Allied Force, so that any time that U.S. commanders needed to convey

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<sup>3</sup>United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, *Kosovo: Lessons Learned from the Crisis*, Chapter 6. The full report is available at <http://www.kosovo.mod.uk/lessons>.

sensitive information, such as target lists and the daily ATO, they had to print out the information and hand-deliver it to their allied counterparts. The allies would then type that information into their own secure communications systems for transmission to their forces.<sup>4</sup> This lengthy process reduced NATO's flexibility, making it extremely hard for the Alliance to process data on mobile targets and targets of opportunity in a timely fashion.<sup>5</sup>

At the tactical level, the lack of secure radio links posed serious problems. Because allied personnel could not communicate with one another over secure frequencies, they had to transmit aircraft positions and target coordinates over open frequencies. Furthermore, different U.S. forces possessed incompatible communications systems as well, requiring them too to rely on non-encrypted radio channels. The Serbs often intercepted these signals and adjusted their plans accordingly.<sup>6</sup> After the war, several U.S. and NATO commanders acknowledged that the Yugoslav forces often had advance knowledge of NATO targets, and indicated that the lack of secure communications played an important role in this security breach.<sup>7</sup>

### Other Interoperability Issues

British tankers were interoperable with most NATO aircraft but not with all U.S. Air Force assets. According to Air Vice Marshal Peter Nicholl, the United Kingdom was the only NATO ally to put the Joint Tactical Information Distribution System (JTIDS) on its tankers, and those tankers gave 85 percent of their fuel to planes from other countries. Nicholl also stated that the British tankers refueled planes from

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<sup>4</sup>For more on the problems disseminating the ATO, see Lieutenant General Marvin R. Esmond, testimony to the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Military Procurement, October 19, 1999.

<sup>5</sup>David A. Fulghum, "Serb Threat Subsides, But U.S. Still Worries," *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, April 12, 1999; John D. Morrocco, "Kosovo Conflict Highlights Limits of Airpower and Capability Gaps," *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, May 17, 1999.

<sup>6</sup>John D. Morrocco, "Kosovo Reveals Interoperability Woes," *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, August 9, 1999; Jumper testimony, October 26, 1999.

<sup>7</sup>Clark testimony, July 1, 1999; Shelton testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, July 20, 1999; Jumper testimony, October 26, 1999.

the U.S. Navy and the Marine Corps, but could not service all U.S. Air Force planes. Nicholl noted that only F-16s, sold widely among the allies, were able to take on fuel from the British tankers.<sup>8</sup>

### **OPERATION ALLIED FORCE AS A MODEL FOR FUTURE ALLIED OPERATIONS**

A key question about Operation Allied Force is the extent to which it will serve as a model for future allied operations. The NATO allies agree that it will be a model in at least one respect: future operations will be conducted as part of a multinational coalition. Yet they are less convinced that Kosovo will serve as an appropriate model in other ways, such as the U.S. dominance of the operation, the lack of ground troops, and the legal basis of the operation.

#### **Coalition Operations**

The United States and the European allies agree that, given the shared values and largely congruent world views among them, future operations are very likely to be conducted as part of a coalition, whether they involve all 19 allies, smaller coalitions of the willing, or a combination of countries from both inside and outside the Alliance. Many of the allies emphasize this point in their national doctrines, and they believe that the Kosovo experience reaffirmed this principle. For example, the official British lessons learned document concludes, "future operations will almost always be conducted in coalition with our partners and Allies."<sup>9</sup>

#### **U.S. Role**

As discussed above, the United States dominated every aspect of Operation Allied Force. It provided most of the aircraft, flew most of the sorties, and directed much of the conduct of the operation. Some of the European allies (France in particular opposes "growing

<sup>8</sup>Testimony before the House of Commons Defence Committee, April 12, 2000, available at <http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm199900/cmselect/cmdfence/347/0041201.htm>, Questions 445 and 446.

<sup>9</sup>*Kosovo: Lessons Learned from the Crisis*, Chapter 6.10.

American hegemony") have serious reservations about relying on the United States to this extent during future operations. For now, the Europeans lack many of the support capabilities necessary to deploy and sustain a significant force outside of their own borders, and so they will continue to rely on the United States for the foreseeable future. The Europeans have been aware of these shortcomings for quite some time and have attempted to address them through the European Security and Defense Policy, but Operation Allied Force brought them into stark relief. The Kosovo experience sparked a drive to create an independent European military capability that will theoretically be established by the year 2003. This potential force faces numerous challenges (see Chapter Four), but to the extent that the Europeans are able to successfully generate this force, they will have much greater influence over the strategic, operational, and even tactical aspects of any future allied operation.

### Ground Troops

The absence of ground forces and of European influence on the shape and conduct of the campaign detract from OAF as a model at the practical, military level. Although recent history includes a number of instances where the air arm operated successfully without a ground component—Desert Fox, Northern and Southern Watch, and Deliberate Force—a model for future operations should be suitable for a wide range of circumstances and conditions, and therefore should include a ground component. The concerns here contain echoes of the dispute over gradualism and the wisdom of the fight-and-negotiate strategies discussed in Chapter Two. Simply stated, the Europeans want not only a larger role in the design and planning of military actions, but somewhat different approaches to warfighting from those of the United States—approaches that reflect in part a different notion of the lash-up between military and diplomatic action, and a moderately differing view of what is acceptable when applying force-of-arms. For example, many Europeans would probably prefer strategies that rely more heavily on diplomacy than on military action, whereas U.S. preferences would likely be the other way around. Many Europeans would probably prefer use of force proportionate with the stakes of the dispute, whereas the U.S. military has a preference for overwhelming force.

The Europeans are concerned that U.S. casualty sensitivity contributed to the Alliance's reluctance to use ground troops, and that that sensitivity may hinder future operations. The British, for example, argued forcefully that NATO should consider a ground invasion, and the British lessons learned report explicitly states that "there was no requirement for 'zero casualties,' as has been alleged."<sup>10</sup> Future Alliance operations, particularly ones of coalitions of the willing, may be far more likely to include a ground component, especially if the members believe that their interests are threatened.

### Legal Justification

The European allies were deeply uncomfortable with the legal basis of Operation Allied Force. France, Germany, and many of the other allies view international law as the cornerstone of regional and international security. Legal military interventions, according to this conception, should be authorized by the United Nations or other regional organization such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Operation Allied Force had no such endorsement. Instead, the United States argued that the NATO treaty provided legal justification for the Alliance to act wherever its interests were threatened.<sup>11</sup> Each of the allies reached a decision on its own as to what was an acceptable legal basis for action. Some Europeans may have agreed with the United States because they knew that Russia and China would veto any UN authorizing resolution, and because they believed that Operation Allied Force would be a limited operation that would last only a few days. The day after the operation began, British Defence Secretary George Robertson publicly stated that NATO based its legal justification "on the accepted principle that force may be used in extreme circumstances to avert a humanitarian catastrophe."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup>*Kosovo: Lessons Learned from the Crisis*, Chapter 7.13.

<sup>11</sup>Cohen testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, April 15, 1999; July 20, 1999; and October 14, 1999.

<sup>12</sup>"UK's Robertson: NATO Acting Within International Law," in FBIS-WEU-1999-0325, March 25, 1999. Robertson also claimed that Operation Allied Force was legally justified because Milosevic had failed to comply with UN Security Council Resolution 1199. However, Resolution 1199 does not authorize any use of force, simply stating that failure to comply should lead the Security Council "to consider further action and

As the operation escalated, several of the Europeans grew increasingly concerned that their actions lacked international legitimacy. Greece strongly believed that such a military operation required UN authorization, and in late April, 20 Greek judges challenged the legal basis of the bombing campaign.<sup>13</sup> Germany repeatedly expressed concerns about the legal framework throughout the operation, and as the ground-force option reemerged in late May, a senior German foreign policy advisor emphasized that a ground invasion could not occur without authorization from the UN Security Council.<sup>14</sup> The allies reached a compromise agreement at the Washington summit, reaffirming the importance of the United Nations but not requiring the UN to authorize NATO operations.<sup>15</sup> Yet many of the European allies continue to believe that legitimate interventions require international approval, and they may be less likely to support operations that have not been authorized by the UN Security Council, the OSCE, or some other international body.

## NATIONAL PROGRAMS REVEALING SHORTFALLS

When Operation Allied Force commenced, many of the European allies were already restructuring their military forces. The United Kingdom was implementing the recommendations contained in the 1998 Strategic Defense Review. France was continuing the reform and modernization plans adopted in its 1994 White Paper on

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additional measures to maintain or restore peace and stability in the region." See UN Security Council Resolution 1199, September 23, 1998.

<sup>13</sup>The Greek judges charged that Operation Allied Force violated the UN charter—the UN had not authorized this use of force and it violated NATO's charter because the Alliance was designed for the territorial defense of its members. These charges were largely symbolic, since it is not clear that the judges had any jurisdiction over these issues. However, they also charged that the Greek government was violating the Greek constitution by providing facilities for an offensive war. Ultimately, these charges did not interfere with the government's support for the operation, but they could have posed significant domestic problems if the operation had lasted longer. "Greek Judges Charge NATO's Yugoslav Attack," in FBIS-WEU-1999-0430, April 30, 1999.

<sup>14</sup>"German Ground Troops in Kosovo Not 'Ruled Out,'" in FBIS-WEU-1999-0531, May 31, 1999.

<sup>15</sup>Paragraph 4 of the Washington Declaration states, "We reaffirm our faith, as stated in the North Atlantic Treaty, in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and reiterate our desire to live in peace with all nations, and to settle any international dispute by peaceful means." For the full text of the Washington Declaration, see NATO Press Release NAC-S (99) 63, April 23, 1999.

Defense. Even the smaller allies, such as Italy and the Netherlands, were reducing the numbers of military personnel and emphasizing power projection capabilities. The European allies generally believe that Operation Allied Force vindicated the strategic decisions that they had already made, and that it demonstrated that the reform process was on the right track. As British Vice Admiral Sir Jeremy Blackham explained, "there are no lessons from Kosovo which did not figure in our analysis beforehand. What has changed is the priority that we are attaching to some of them."<sup>16</sup>

Nevertheless, OAF revealed specific shortcomings that are not necessarily included in these broad reform programs. These shortcomings can be grouped into the following seven categories: precision and all-weather capabilities, cruise missiles and standoff weapons, electronic warfare and SEAD, strategic airlift, aerial refueling, multinational logistics and procurement, and intelligence collection and processing.

### **Precision and All-Weather Capabilities**

Precision-guided munitions represent a sound way to improve air force effectiveness in that the aircraft employing them typically require fewer sorties to destroy their targets. Operation Allied Force relied heavily on PGMs to limit collateral damage. This reliance reduced the role that the European allies could play, because few of them possessed PGM capabilities. All of the European allies have resolved to increase their precision capabilities, so they can conduct accurate strikes around the clock, under restrictive rules of engagement, and in all weather conditions.

France is currently developing its own long-range precision weapon, the Advanced Air-to-Surface Missile (AASM), which is scheduled to enter the inventory in 2004. France also expects to acquire an all-weather precision capability, such as the MICA missile or the Apache-AP and Scalp-EG cruise missiles. Most of the other European allies will not be able to afford to develop their own precision weapons and will hope to procure existing systems from the United States or to develop one on a bilateral basis. Likely weapon

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<sup>16</sup>Defence Committee testimony, April 12, 2000, Question 435.

systems include the Maverick missile and derivatives of the U.S. LANTIRN pods that provide nighttime capabilities and laser guidance.

Seven NATO members are planning to procure the Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM), and other European allies are likely to follow suit.<sup>17</sup> The JDAM relies on guidance from the Global Positioning System (GPS), which remains unaffected by cloud cover and other weather conditions. It is also relatively inexpensive, since some conventional munitions can be transformed into JDAMs with an \$18,000 tail kit.<sup>18</sup> European aircraft will typically require major sensor upgrades to take full advantage of JDAM. A relatively new munition, JDAM is still in low-rate production in the United States. The Europeans will pursue procurement of the JDAM as soon as production rates increase; it will greatly improve their precision capabilities without huge capital expenditures. Laser-guided bombs are also an economical option.

### **Cruise Missiles and Standoff Weapons**

Just as precision munitions improve overall strike efficiency and reduce the risk of collateral damage, cruise missiles and standoff weapons reduce the risk to air crews. Operation Allied Force demonstrated that the European allies do not currently possess many long-range weapons, and they have identified this as an area that needs significant improvement. Such accurate, long-range weapons with relatively large warheads would be a welcome addition to the allied inventory, for example, when confronting adversaries with elaborate air defense systems that can threaten attacking aircraft over longer distances that exceed the range of JDAM and simpler guided weapons.

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<sup>17</sup>The seven countries are Belgium, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.

<sup>18</sup>U.S. B-2 bombers were the only planes to deliver JDAMs during OAF. "Kosovo/Operation Allied Force: After Action Report," p. 91.



## Electronic Warfare and Suppression of Enemy Air Defense

Electronic warfare, especially the support jamming mission, proved essential to suppress enemy air defenses during the campaign. Allied capabilities in support jamming proved meager, however, and U.S. aircraft—typically the EA-6B—shouldered most of the workload.

After Operation Allied Force, NATO circulated force proposals for SEAD capabilities. The response to these proposals has been mixed. No new programs for support jamming are underway, despite the fact that it plays a crucial role in both high-intensity and low-intensity conflicts. Germany and Italy, in cooperation with the United States, are pursuing a new antiradiation missile that could significantly enhance SEAD capabilities. However, there are ways to improve some SEAD capabilities without procuring dedicated airframes. The United Kingdom is currently exploring whether it is possible to improve SEAD capabilities by improving intelligence collection and more advanced sensor-to-shooter links.<sup>19</sup>

## Strategic Airlift

Strategic airlift is a particular problem for the European allies. Although many of them have improved their airlift capabilities since the end of the Cold War, they still lack the capability to deploy large amounts of equipment and personnel beyond national borders.<sup>20</sup> They recognize this weakness, and are taking steps to remedy it. France, for example, intends to introduce the C-160, as well as cargo versions of the C-160 and the DC-8, into its air fleet by 2002, which will significantly enhance its airlift capabilities. France also intends to improve its military cargo helicopter fleet in the next two years, which will provide increased short-haul capacity.

The Europeans do not currently possess any organic strategic lift assets; all of their transport aircraft must be procured from the United States or other foreign countries. However, Airbus is developing a

<sup>19</sup>Kosovo: *Lessons Learned from the Crisis*, Chapter 7.43.

<sup>20</sup>For an assessment of the changes in European airlift capabilities, see United States General Accounting Office, *NATO: Progress Towards More Mobile and Deployable Forces*, GAO/NSIAD-99-229, September 1999, especially pp. 14–16.

plane that would fill this gap in European capabilities. Plans for the Future Large Aircraft (FLA) have been underway for almost two decades. Airbus took over the project in 1998 and renamed the aircraft the A-400M. As it is currently designed, the A400M would be able to transport twice the weight and twice the volume as the C-130J, with only slightly higher life-cycle costs. Seven European countries have already expressed interest in the A400M, and production is scheduled to start sometime in the next year. If this schedule holds, the first A-400M flight would be held in 2004 and the first planes would be delivered in 2006.<sup>21</sup> Because Airbus is an international consortium, the decision to go ahead with the A-400M is likely to be as political as it is financial, and it is not clear whether it will progress as planned. Nevertheless, the A-400M project indicates that the European allies have identified airlift as a significant weakness in their power projection capabilities and are working to overcome it.

Several European allies are already in the process of forming an air transport command that would pool their aircraft to support European military operations. Germany and France agreed to establish this new command during a bilateral summit in December 1999, and Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, and Spain subsequently announced their intention to join. This command could significantly strengthen European airlift capabilities by achieving economies of scale and synergies that smaller national contributions could not achieve on their own. Such benefits will obviously be easier to achieve if all the Europeans procure the same type of transport aircraft, such as the A400, but the countries involved have all emphasized that their plans for this new command will go forward even if different countries procure different equipment.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Nick Cook, "Airbus airlifter bid relaunched with A400M," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, February 3, 1999; "Airbus European Sales Could Affect US," in FBIS-WEU-1999-1027, October 27, 1999.

<sup>22</sup>"Franco-German Defense Accords Viewed," in FBIS-WEU-1999-1202, December 2, 1999.

## Aerial Refueling

Aerial refueling, which enables planes to stay aloft without having to return to their home bases, plays a crucial role in sustaining power projection forces. However, only six of the European allies possess any aerial refueling capabilities, and these are not enough to sustain their own airplanes.<sup>23</sup> The Europeans relied heavily on U.S. tanker sorties during Operation Allied Force, leading several of the allies to resolve to improve their capabilities in this area. Current NATO force proposals, for example, would roughly double the tanker capacity of non-U.S. air forces. France has decided to increase its tanker capacity by approximately 33 percent, Germany intends to convert four A-310 aircraft to in-flight tankers, and Italy plans to acquire refueling kits for some of its C-130J aircraft.

## Multinational Logistics and Procurement

Logistics must increasingly be conducted on a multinational instead of a national basis. NATO is implementing its Multinational Joint Logistics Center, which when mature will overturn the long-standing NATO arrangement under which countries provide support for their own military contingents. There is still a long way to go, however.

The European allies have begun to emphasize multinational procurement and major European arms manufacturers have taken steps toward creating a pan-European armaments agency. The Western European Armaments Group (WEAG), under the sponsorship of the Western European Union (WEU), was founded in 1993 as a transitional step toward a European armaments agency. Progress was slow, however, and in 1996, France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom established a new arms agency called the Joint Armaments Cooperation Organization, (OCCAR is the French acronym).<sup>24</sup> It oversees several major multinational procurement programs, including the German-French Tiger attack helicopter, the British-

<sup>23</sup>NATO: *Progress Towards More Mobile and Deployable Forces*, pp. 16–17.

<sup>24</sup>For more on the history of WEAG and OCCAR, see United States General Accounting Office, *Defense Trade: European Initiatives to Integrate the Defense Market*, GAO/NSIAD-98-6, October 1997; Helmut Reda, "A New Era in European Arms Procurement: Understanding OCCAR," *DISAM Journal*, Vol. 21 No. 2, Winter 1999, pp. 82–85.

French-German Multi-Role Armored Vehicle, and several guided missile programs.<sup>25</sup> OCCAR's members hope that the organization will eventually expand to encompass the other European allies the Netherlands has already declared its intention to join. However, the WEAG remains in existence, and will soon become a part of the EU as the WEU is phased out. It remains to be seen whether the Europeans will be able to transform these institutions into a true pan-European armaments agency, but small steps are being taken in that direction.

### Intelligence Collection and Processing

Operation Allied Force demonstrated that the European allies could not gather, process, and distribute intelligence in real time. As a result, they had to rely on information provided by the United States, which the Europeans believe limited their influence over NATO decisions. In particular, France and Germany have concluded that the European allies must develop an autonomous intelligence capability, so that they can analyze events on their own without having to rely on the United States.

Some of the European allies possess national assets that could form the core of a European intelligence capability. France operates an observation satellite called Helios 1A, and it is scheduled to deploy a follow-on system, Helios 1B, by 2002. France recently concluded an agreement with Germany to cooperate on aspects of the Syracuse II successor program, which will develop the next generation of military communications satellites, and both countries hope that they will be able to collaborate on other aspects of the project as well.<sup>26</sup> France, Germany, and Italy expect to expand their UAV capabilities, which provide critical battlefield information. These types of assets are relatively expensive, so it seems likely that any European intelligence capability will be built from the bottom up. Individual allies will probably develop their own intelligence systems, either on a national or bilateral basis, and then those systems will be linked to-

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<sup>25</sup>Damian Kemp, "Missile Makers Dodge Restructuring, Says Study," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, January 26, 2000; and Damian Kemp, "Cash Commitments," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, June 14, 2000.

<sup>26</sup>Michael A. Taverna, "Euro Milsatcom Accord Inked," *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, December 13, 1999.

gether to form a European system. As a multinational alternative, the WEU satellite center in Torrejon might be upgraded and its capabilities supplemented with the launch of additional and improved satellites, able to provide high-resolution battlefield information.

Simply collecting information, however, is not enough. That information must be processed and distributed in ways that help decisionmakers understand the current situation and determine future actions. This process did not occur quickly enough during Operation Allied Force, and the European allies have resolved to improve these intelligence aspects as well. France, for example, is establishing a national targeting center that will provide high-resolution images in real time and allow for more rapid battle damage assessment.

## CONCLUSIONS

Although the European countries that participated in the operation considered it a success, many resented the United States for what they considered to be overbearing control that excluded them from many decisions and minimized their involvement in others. Some feared the prospect of escalation and the potentially disastrous consequences for their coalition governments if the campaign intensified or expanded its attacks.

For these reasons, fewer European countries may offer military forces in future NATO operations. Of course, each country will make its decision based upon the merits of the case at the time and the threat that the crisis poses. But fewer countries will want to join a U.S.-dominated coalition if they see few direct threats to their interests, as was the case in Kosovo, and if they fear being dragged along with the rest of the coalition to unacceptable levels of force.

For this reason, some European states may choose to participate in U.S.-led coalitions as part of an EU force rather than as individual countries. They may believe that working through the EU enables them to avoid U.S. decisionmaking dominance, set their own course of action, and distance themselves from U.S. policies and tactical approaches with which they disagree. If the EU were to evolve its rapid action force to full maturity, the future might feature U.S.-EU coalitions in which the United States must deal with the EU members collectively in a European command.

Given current trends, however, it seems likely that the Europeans will field progressively smaller forces. Since defense spending remains a low priority in most European capitals, the only way they can afford new capabilities is to reduce end-strength and buy smaller quantities of aircraft and weapons systems. Even though future European aircraft will probably be more capable than the generation available today, there will probably be fewer of them, which would only nominally improve the European ability to contribute militarily to any coalition operation.

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## RECONCILING PERSPECTIVES

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### PRIORITIES AND IMPERATIVES FOR SHAPING INTRA-ALLIANCE RELATIONS

As discussed in Chapter Three, the United States and its allies share a fairly consistent view on many aspects of European security, but their individual views differ when it comes to specific questions about multinational military action. This chapter considers the art of the possible—what allies on both sides of the Atlantic can reasonably do to harmonize their views. It attempts to reconcile the various transatlantic perspectives at the political-military level of engagement, and examines the ways in which the ESDI and DCI may be creating a new template for future Alliance and coalition military operations.

#### Political-Military Relations

Political-military relations among the allies remain on firm footing, thanks in part to cooperative activities such as combined exercises and long-standing NATO deliberate planning processes and institutions. Even so, the United States continues to harbor misgivings about the ESDI while some of Washington's allies worry about the resolve behind the United States' long-term commitment to Europe.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Europeans sometimes characterize this as an issue of stabilizing the trans-Atlantic partnership. See Peter Schmidt, "ESDI: 'Separable but not separate'?" *NATO Review*,

One of the key political-military tasks for the future will be to design consultative and collaborative mechanisms that will function more efficiently and effectively, providing both the political means for coalition maintenance and the ability to generate overwhelming force when the participating states deem such force is necessary. Operation Allied Force required intensive political involvement in the daily details of the air war against Serbia. The constant deliberations and consultations were essential to maintain the coalition, to prevent individual states from defecting, and to maintain public support at home and abroad. The consultative process helped preserve the coalition but also prevented the coalition air forces from generating the maximum force and coercive pressure on the Milosevic regime. As Chapter Two made clear, the dynamics of coalition warfare dictated a more gradualist approach, which led to step-by-step escalation in the bombing as earlier steps failed to achieve the desired results in Belgrade. Future political-military arrangements should provide for more flexibility.

## Military Relations

Military relations among allied forces are almost universally cordial, based upon common military values. Friction arises, however, over the optimal use of the military instrument. During the air war over Serbia, the friction manifested itself in targeting disputes.<sup>2</sup> The U.S. air component commander generally sought to apply U.S. aerospace doctrine and focus the attack on Serbian strategic targets: communications centers, power stations, and assets valued by the Serb leadership. Many European officers preferred instead to engage targets that would interfere directly with the ethnic cleansing campaign that Milosevic was carrying out in Kosovo: the Milosevic regime's fielded forces and their local garrisons.<sup>3</sup>

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web edition, Vol. 48, No. 1, Spring-Summer 2000, pp. 12-15, at <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2000/0001-04.htm>.

<sup>2</sup>Although the larger point is that the European and U.S. perspectives differed, it is also important to recognize that the dispute over strategy occurred between General Clark, the SACEUR, and his air component commander, Lieutenant General Short. See Dana Priest, "Tension Grew with Divide Over Strategy."

<sup>3</sup>William M. Arkin, "Smart Bombs, Dumb Targeting?" *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, May/June 2000, p. 46 at <http://ebird.dtic.mil/May2000/s20000501smart.htm>.



The targeting dispute from the Kosovo campaign belies a more profound difference in the approach to the use of the military instrument. At the practical level, European air forces simply could not do what U.S. air forces could. Three could drop precision-guided munitions, but few of their aircraft could fly at night and in bad weather. Others that could fly at night, such as the Dutch, lacked the highly accurate munitions needed for the targets in question.<sup>4</sup>

At the strategic level, the European air forces and the U.S. Air Force have been optimized for different tasks. In accordance with U.S. aerospace doctrine, the U.S. Air Force has become a strategic instrument designed to generate overwhelming force against an adversary's centers of gravity—those things he holds most dear and that contribute directly to his ability to resist the United States.<sup>5</sup> In this role, U.S. air forces shoulder certain strategic tasks on their own. European air forces, in contrast, are generally designed as part of an air-ground team intended to help the battlefield commander reach his more immediate and limited objectives: to damage enemy forces as they approach, strike targets beyond the reach of friendly artillery, and provide close support to units locked in combat with enemy forces.

### Expectations and Operational Practices

These differing air force roles lead necessarily to different expectations and operational practices. For their part, the European air forces have been optimized for their battlefield support role. They have no bombers like the B-2 or B-52 that can deliver massive bomb loads; they instead fly smaller fighter-bombers. Their ordnance inventory emphasizes cluster munitions ideal for attacking large, irregularly shaped targets like advancing enemy formations, while high-accuracy laser-guided munitions preferred by the United States are scarce or entirely absent. And, since ground-force operations

<sup>4</sup>General Jean-Pierre Kelche, French chief of defense staff, disputes this assessment, arguing that European Mirage, Rafael, and Tornado aircraft were as good as the U.S. planes. See "French Chief Says His Forces Aren't 'Inferior' To U.S.," *Defense Week*, May 8, 2000, p. 16. The facts, however, indicate otherwise.

<sup>5</sup>U.S. Air Force, *Organization and Employment of Aerospace Power*, February 17, 2000, at <http://www.doctrine.af.mil/Library/document/asp?doc=2>.

remain predominantly daytime activities, European air forces need only limited nighttime capabilities.

Given their distinctly different orientations, it is essential that the United States and its allies come to some common understanding on tasks that their military forces must prepare for. Put another way, just as during the Cold War all the ground forces within NATO endorsed a general approach to turning a Soviet-led invasion—codified in ATP-35B, *Conceptual Military Framework* as NATO doctrine—to-day the most effective coalitions must center around members with a common general approach to military operations conducted at some distance from home bases and support facilities. This common approach will include consensus on the types of enemy assets and resources that should be attacked and priorities for their engagement. The approach will also address the mechanisms and processes for consultations and deliberations necessary for sustaining the political viability of the coalition. It must ultimately adapt the capabilities of the various European forces in a way that maximizes their contributions toward the coalition's military objectives. Building a common approach will ensure that the military forces of all nations are suitable for employment in Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTFs).

## FUTURE ALLIED MILITARY OPERATIONS

As Chapter Three indicated, several of the allies view Operation Allied Force as atypical and an unlikely example for future operations. Few, for example, would construct future campaigns without a ground force. Some allies, such as Germany, which face stiff domestic political opposition to these types of military actions, will probably insist on a much clearer understanding about the ultimate scope and extent of the campaign before agreeing to participate, lest they again be swept into a longer, more intense use of force than they had bargained for. Nevertheless, at least three issues from Operation Allied Force are likely to be prominent in future coalition operations: consultation and coalition building, force packages and packaging, and managing the campaign duration.

## Consultation and Coalition Building

The current NATO strategic concept has cast the Alliance in a new role, a role in which its members attempt to deal with trouble and instability in and around Europe before the consequences are manifested within alliance territory itself.<sup>6</sup> This emphasis on preemption and early intervention means that many future missions will confront threats that do not yet pose direct and immediate dangers to NATO members. In some instances, these missions may be mounted, as was the case in Operation Allied Force, in large part to preserve the Alliance. Such future operations may appear to be voluntary or elective to the countries contemplating participating in them. National authorities will not be able to justify involvement by arguing it is essential to national survival. These circumstances make for potentially fragile coalitions, and require carefully designed arrangements among the participating countries to provide for consultations necessary to build and sustain the multinational effort.

These essential consultative, collaborative, political activities should be regularly practiced as part of NATO and Partnership for Peace (PfP) exercises. NATO should recognize that these activities are vital and rehearse the political consultations and decision processes involved so that national leadership groups become accustomed to dealing with the questions that arise and are prepared to do so in a timely manner. Future force packages should be designed to include the communications necessary to support coalition maintenance and national consultations. NATO has taken similar steps in the past to accommodate nuclear weapons decisionmaking and control procedures in its strategy when nuclear operations were potentially decisive to the survival of Western Europe. Since maintenance of intra-Alliance military coalitions will be similarly decisive to the success of many future multinational operations, the Alliance should be ready to facilitate and support consultations and coalition building among its members.

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<sup>6</sup>NATO Press Communiqué NAC-S(99)65, April 24, 1999.

### **Force Packages and Packaging**

Given the uncertainties about which countries will participate in future operations and how a military operation can quickly make unexpected demands on its participants, the only way for the Atlantic Alliance to assure itself of the resources necessary to operate under its current strategic concept is to encourage its members to build modular forces optimized for CJTF duty. NATO's current CJTF concept could be further developed with the adoption of a modular force policy Alliance-wide. Modular designs will produce units that can plug easily into multinational formations. Modular designs would include all the essential combat and supporting elements within the units so that their deployment would not strip support capabilities from parent units, thus rendering the rest of the parent unit's squadrons ineffective. They must, of course, meet the DCI criteria for mobility, sustainability and logistics, survivability, and effectiveness. (That said, they must integrate easily into the overall coalition effort and be replaceable with similar modules when their personnel become due for rotation in protracted campaigns.) Modular forces should also make it easier to address changing requirements. For example, in Operation Allied Force, the Europeans had additional aerial refueling tankers, but the NATO "statement of requirements" process was not responsive enough to solicit the aircraft from the member nations, and their tanker fleets and crews were not prepared for deployment in many cases anyway. Having appropriate modules of supporting aircraft and maintaining them at readiness levels commensurate with the likelihood of their deployment could avoid similar problems in the future.

### **Managing Military Commitments**

Campaign duration is a potentially serious issue because many of the allies already have force deployments abroad that they must maintain. These deployments, summarized in Table 4.1, require a rotation base for support and sustainment. Most allies must commit three units for each deployment: one in the field, one preparing to relieve it, and one recovering from recent duty abroad. Multiple deployments represent a source of major disruption and dislocation within many allied forces, resulting in pressure to terminate

campaigns quickly to avoid another long-term commitment of troops.

To provide a more complete picture of current overseas commitments, Figure 4.1 adds rotational requirements to the figures in Table 4.1. It then estimates the total deployable manpower within the armed forces of selected allies and shows the percentage of these forces that are currently committed to ongoing operations. The estimate of total deployable forces is generous because it does not distinguish between army, air force, and naval personnel. The actual deployable numbers should be somewhat smaller, because personnel from the three services are not fully interchangeable. The figure illustrates that a significant percentage of deployable European forces are already committed to current operations, and that countries such as the United Kingdom and France may not have many deployable personnel available for new contingency operations. During and after Operation Allied Force, many European military officials cautioned that their forces were approaching the limits of their

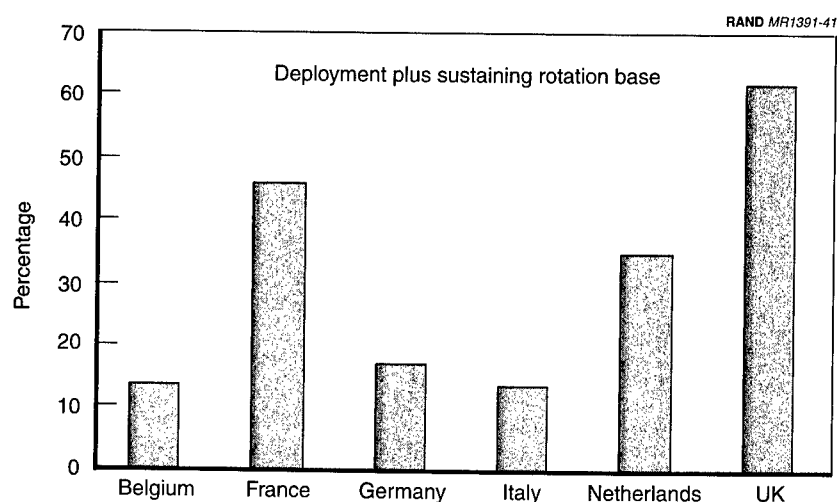


Figure 4.1—Estimated Percentage of Deployable Forces  
Currently Committed

**Table 4.1**  
**Current Force Deployments of Selected Allied Countries**

Country	Deployment Area (Operation)	Number of Troops or Units
Belgium	Albania (AFOR II)	
	Bosnia/Croatia (SFOR II)	550
	India/Pakistan (UNMOGIP)	1,100
	Middle East (UNTSO)	2
	Yugoslavia (Joint Guardian)	6
France	Albania (AFOR II)	
	Antilles	2,200
	Bosnia (SFOR II)	3,000
	Chad	900
	Côte D'Ivoire	570
	Djibouti	2,600
	French Guiana	2,200
	Gabon	700
	Georgia (UNOMIG)	5
	Germany	3,300
		(Eurocorps)
	Indian Ocean	2,850
	Iraq/Kuwait (UNIKOM)	11
	Lebanon (UNIFIL)	246
	Middle East (UNTSO)	3
	New Caledonia	2,300
	Polynesia	2,000
	Saudi Arabia (Southern Watch)	170
	Senegal	1,200
	Western Sahara (MINURSO)	25
	Yugoslavia (Joint Guardian)	6,000
Germany		2,738
	Albania (AFOR II)	1
	Bosnia (SFOR II)	15
	Georgia (UNOMIG)	8,000
	Iraq/Kuwait (UNIKOM)	
Italy	Yugoslavia (Joint Guardian)	
	Albania (AFOR II)	2,531
	Bosnia (SFOR II)	2,313
	Egypt (MFO)	77
	Germany	92
	Guatemala	7
	Hebron	27
	India/Pakistan	7

Table 4.1—continued

Country	Deployment Area (Operation)	Number of Troops or Units
Italy	Iraq/Kuwait	4
	Israel	8
	Kosovo (Joint Guarantor)	1,106
	Lebanon (UNIFIL)	44
	Malta	16
	Middle East (UNTSO)	8
	Morocco and Western Sahara	6
	Yugoslavia	32
Netherlands	Albania (AFOR II)	
	Bosnia (SFOR II)	1,220
	Cyprus	102
	Germany	3,000
	Iceland	16
	Italy	55
	Middle East (UNTSO)	10
	Netherlands Antilles	-25
	Yugoslavia (Joint Guardian)	2,000
United Kingdom	Albania (AFOR II)	130
	Ascension Island	27
	Belize	180
	Bosnia (SFOR II)	4,500
	Brunei	-1,050
	Canada	355
	Cyprus	3,200
	Cyprus (UNFICYP)	306
	Falkland Islands	-400
	Georgia (UNOMIG)	7
	Germany	20,800
		(ARRC, NATO)
	Gibraltar	330
	Iraq/Kuwait (Southern Watch)	400
	Italy (SFOR air)	350
	Saudi Arabia (Southern Watch)	200
	Sierra Leone	5
	Turkey (Northern Watch)	160
	Yugoslavia (Joint Guardian)	-9,600
	30 countries	455 military advisors

SOURCE: IISS, *The Military Balance*, 1999–2000.

deployment capabilities.<sup>7</sup> Large overseas commitments also affected the ground-force debate; France, for example, wanted to delay any NATO invasion until the year 2000 in order to have more time to gather and ready its forces.<sup>8</sup> As KFOR joins SFOR as a semi-permanent operation, even fewer European assets will be available for future contingency operations and deployments.

The key challenge in managing campaign duration lies in reconciling the apparently contradictory influences of minimum force and short campaigns. The record of recent Alliance-based military interventions from Operation Desert Storm to the present has left the adversary regime intact with its essential armed forces also in place. Many factors influenced decisions producing this outcome, but the fact remains: Western eagerness to end the fighting at the earliest possible date with the least amount of destruction has resulted in the adversary remaining in power with the means to resist the coalition's will. The coalition forces have, as a result, had to maintain no-fly zones, peacekeeping forces, and other forms of military presence to ensure stability in the region. The result has been a growing number of stability missions and the constant military presence summarized in Table 4.1.

Taken to extremes, a future series of long-term campaigns on top of the allies' current force commitments could leave the Alliance with its military capabilities fractionated and strategically marooned on the islands of trouble that sprout up throughout the European region and along its periphery. One way for NATO to avoid this potential danger would be for its members to refine their collective understanding of the use of force—to find some reasonable ground between current U.S. preferences for overwhelming force and high-tempo operations and European preferences for more-limited

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<sup>7</sup>See "German Army Inspector Views Budget Cuts," in FBIS-WEU-1999-0712, July 12, 1999; "Foreign Operations Strain Belgian Defense Budget," in FBIS-WEU-1999-0816, August 16, 1999; "UK May Cut Troops Commitment for Kosovo, Bosnia," in FBIS-WEU-1999-1020, October 20, 1999.

<sup>8</sup>Daalder and O'Hanlon, pp. 162–163. The authors argue that NATO would not have agreed to this extended timetable, since it would have forced the Kosovar Albanians to endure a difficult winter and given Milosevic more time to try to split the Alliance. They conclude that France would ultimately have participated in the ground invasion, but that it would have been able to contribute only 15,000 to 20,000 troops—a much smaller number than French decisionmakers would have liked.



action. The members should cooperate to devise approaches to limited warfare that will nevertheless deprive the enemy of the means to resist.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DEFENSE CAPABILITIES INITIATIVE**

Operation Allied Force demonstrated that the DCI correctly identified the areas in which the NATO allies must improve their capabilities. Since the end of the campaign, many of the European allies have begun developing the robust, deployable forces advocated by the DCI. NATO created a High Level Steering Group (HLSG) during the Washington summit to supervise implementation of the DCI and to coordinate the work of NATO's defense-related committees. The HLSG has defined milestones for measuring progress toward the Defense Capabilities Initiative's major objectives, developed organizations such as the Multinational Joint Logistics Center, and assessed the extent to which Alliance members are implementing DCI concepts. Perhaps more important, both of NATO's military commands—SACEUR and SACLANT—have developed force goals that are closely linked to the DCI objectives.<sup>9</sup> NATO has done a good job of identifying areas for improvement, linking them to the Alliance's force goals, and establishing mechanisms to oversee implementation. Two areas, however, require further development: the establishment of priorities for force improvements and agreeing on funding for defense programs.

#### **Establishing Priorities**

When the DCI first appeared, its principal initiatives each enjoyed equal status, but the events of Operation Allied Force and the imperatives of the NATO strategic concept collectively suggest a set of priorities. The countries contributing air forces against Serbia needed time for deployment. The NATO strategic concept is at heart a crisis management strategy, which necessarily emphasizes prompt, early

<sup>9</sup>Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Franklin D. Kramer, prepared statement submitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Subcommittee on European Affairs, March 9, 2000.

deployment of forces as the military response to trouble. Second, both Operation Allied Force and the strategic concept require forces to operate beyond the reach of their home stations and support facilities. These two conditions suggest that deployability and sustainability deserve increased priority among DCI's key attributes.

Member countries must design their units to make them as deployable as possible. In practical terms, that means the units must include equipment of a size and weight that can be transported aboard the available means: aircraft, trucks, rail cars, and ships. Moreover, member nations must have reliable, prompt access to the transportation means to ship their forces to the scene of remote crises.

Once deployed, the units must be sustained. Sustainment involves a logistics system that can deliver supplies and replenish consumed commodities—fuel, batteries, rations, ammunition, and the like—but it also involves designing units around major equipment items that require a minimum of care and maintenance while deployed. This implies fuel-efficient vehicles, high-output batteries, and more-effective munitions, among other things, so that the support demanded by an individual unit creates the smallest possible burden for the logistics system. Finally, the allied forces must be capable of accomplishing the tasks comprising their missions. They must have the communications, avionics, and munitions to find and destroy their targets with precision.

### Agreeing on Funding

Secretary General George Robertson has long stressed that Europe must become more efficient so that its defense investments yield larger dividends. His sentiments were echoed by British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, who noted that, although Europe spends 60 percent of what the United States does on defense, it does not receive a proportionate return.<sup>10</sup> The secretary-general's implicit long-term strategy is certainly on target. If Europe is to manage the growing military capabilities gap with the United States, it must receive a more efficient return on its defense investment. In the near

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<sup>10</sup>Patrick Wintour, "Defense Officials Call for European Military Backbone," *Washington Times*, August 22, 1999, p. C12.

term, however, this strategy is unlikely to produce large dividends. The structural reforms needed by the collective European defense industry are simply too extensive and too politically sensitive to be implemented quickly. In the near term, the Europeans must reverse recent trends of defense reductions and invest more; there is simply no other way to realize major improvements in defense capabilities promptly.

Focused new investments and judicious reprogramming of currently available funding, if managed carefully, could produce modest but nevertheless real improvements in the top-priority DCI categories suggested above, such as deployability and sustainability. Of course, the Europeans have already begun important improvements in these areas. The EU is starting to discuss common target goals for defense spending, which would prioritize capital spending and force projection capabilities.<sup>11</sup> The only way the Alliance as a whole can assure itself of the necessary capabilities to execute its strategic concept, however, is for NATO to monitor and measure carefully the investment inputs and the capability outputs in each of the key DCI areas.

## **MANAGING THE EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENSE IDENTITY**

The European Union faces a full agenda if it is to create a military capability to complement its economic and political capabilities. The EU faces three main challenges: developing the institutions of the ESDI, promoting efficiency within the European defense establishment, and encouraging additional defense investments.

### **Institutional Development of the ESDI After Allied Force**

Institution-building has been under way for some time. On the same day that Milosevic agreed to withdraw his forces from Kosovo, the EU heads of state approved several measures to strengthen ESDI. The official declaration from the Cologne summit, held on June 3 and 4, stated that "the Union must have the capacity for autonomous ac-

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<sup>11</sup>François Heisbourg, "Europe's Strategic Ambitions: The Limits of Ambiguity," *Survival*, Vol. 42 No. 2, Summer 2000, pp. 5-15.

tion, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises without prejudice to actions by NATO." The EU heads of state also made two decisions during the summit that were important steps to achieving this vision. First, the EU announced that it intended to absorb the functions of the WEU, and that the WEU would cease to exist as an organization at the end of that process. Second, the EU created a new position, known as the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, so that one person would be in charge.<sup>12</sup> The EU appointed Javier Solana to the new position, although he did not officially take office until October. Solana's background as the NATO Secretary General made him an ideal candidate for this new position: it gave him the credibility necessary to build a European defense capability, while also signaling the EU's intention to cooperate closely with NATO.<sup>13</sup> These important decisions were a remarkable step forward for the EU, marking its first concrete steps toward an independent military capability. As one member of the European Parliament explained, "The Kosovo war will be considered in the future as a milestone in the history of the EU because it was the key factor which led to the Declaration adopted on 4 June in Cologne."<sup>14</sup>

The momentum toward an improved ESDI continued to build in the months following Allied Force. On November 19, 1999, the EU held its first-ever joint meeting of foreign and defense ministers, to discuss ways to improve the Union's military capabilities.<sup>15</sup> Less than a month later, the EU announced an ambitious plan for an independent military capability during the Helsinki summit, held on December 9 and 10, 1999. The Headline Goal, as this plan came to be known, called for a European rapid reaction force of 50,000 to

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<sup>12</sup>"European Council Declaration on Strengthening the Common European Policy on Security and Defence," June 3 and 4, 1999 (Council of the European Union Web site, <http://ue.eu.int/pesc/default.asp?lang=en>); Craig R. Whitney, "European Union Vows to Become Military Power," *New York Times*, June 4, 1999.

<sup>13</sup>Joseph Fitchett, "Solana May Get Europe Defense Post," *International Herald Tribune*, June 2, 1999; Craig R. Whitney, "NATO Leader Is Moving to New Security Post," *New York Times*, June 5, 1999.

<sup>14</sup>Brok testimony, November 10, 1999.

<sup>15</sup>"EU Takes Step to Forge a United Defense Policy," *International Herald Tribune*, November 16, 1999.

60,000 troops, to be deployable within 60 days, sustainable for a year, and ready by the year 2003. The EU leaders took the first steps in this direction during the summit meeting by agreeing to build the command and planning staffs, decisionmaking structures, intelligence bases, and deployment capabilities that such a force would need.<sup>16</sup> European officials insisted that the Headline Goal represented a pool of European capabilities that could be used by NATO as well as by the EU. The EU heads of state also declared their intention to develop formal links between NATO and the EU to ensure a cooperative relationship between the two organizations.<sup>17</sup> The Headline Goal was formulated rather quickly, after only a few weeks of discussions at the highest levels of the EU, to give the Europeans the ability to conduct a KFOR-type operation in the future. The EU members deliberately avoided a formal analytic review to determine the proper size and force composition, because they feared that would derail the entire project. Instead, the force requirements were loosely modeled after KFOR, since the Kosovo operation provided a salient reminder of the need for an improved European capability.

The Headline Goal is an ambitious endeavor, because it requires the Europeans to significantly improve their capabilities in a relatively short time. Rotation demands mean that a deployable force of 50,000 to 60,000 troops requires a total force of more than 200,000 troops. The European militaries currently have around two million people in uniform, but conscription restrictions reduce the number of troops available for deployment. Nevertheless, finding enough troops for the force should be one of the easier challenges to solve. The deployment and sustainment requirements are likely to be far more challenging, as was demonstrated in Operation Allied Force. Given constant or declining defense budgets throughout Europe, it will be difficult for the Europeans to develop and procure the substantial transportation, logistics, and communications assets that

<sup>16</sup>Craig R. Whitney, "Military Posture of Europe to Turn More Independent," *New York Times*, December 13, 1999; Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Marc Grossman, testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, March 9, 2000.

<sup>17</sup>The nature of these links remains a contentious issue within the EU. France and the EU neutrals have opposed creating formal links between the two organizations, because they fear that it will give the United States some influence over EU decisions. William Drozdiak, "U.S. Tepid on European Defense Plan," *Washington Post*, March 7, 2000.

this rapid reaction force will require. Experts have already cautioned that the European states do not possess the political will to redirect their financial resources toward defense and away from other domestic priorities. Naumann, for example, has warned that it could take up to ten years to develop the Headline Goal force.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, the EU continues to make progress toward achieving its goal. On March 1, 2000, Solana announced the creation of three new institutional structures: a political and security committee of ambassadors, a military committee of senior officers, and a multinational planning staff. Some elements of these new structures were taken over from the WEU. Solana stressed from the outset—despite France's disagreement—that these arrangements would facilitate close cooperation with NATO in that officers would be double-hatted to serve on the military staffs of both organizations simultaneously.<sup>19</sup> In September 2000, the European defense ministers agreed that the Headline Goal force would require an additional 20,000 soldiers, bringing the total to 80,000.<sup>20</sup> The EU also held a Capabilities Commitment conference in November 2000, where EU members made initial force commitments and developed a review process for ensuring that those commitments are met.<sup>21</sup>

There is clearly a long way to go before the EU can realize the Headline Goal, but it has been making slow and relatively steady progress toward developing an institutional structure for such a force. However, it remains to be seen whether individual member

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<sup>18</sup>David Sands, "Bid to Create EU Army Stalled," *Washington Times*, January 9, 2000; "Long Wait Seen for an EU Crisis Force," *International Herald Tribune*, March 30, 2000.

<sup>19</sup>French officers would serve solely on the EU military staff (France does not participate in NATO's integrated command structure). Joseph Fitchett, "EU Takes Steps to Create a Military Force, Without Treading on NATO," *International Herald Tribune*, March 1, 2000.

<sup>20</sup>"France: EU ministers agree on 80,000-strong rapid deployment force for 2003," in FBIS-WEU-2000-0922, September 22, 2000.

<sup>21</sup>As of this writing, only six countries have announced their intended contributions to the Headline Goal force. Germany will contribute 18,000 personnel; Belgium, 3000 personnel, 12 F-16 fighters, and nine ships; the Netherlands, 3000 personnel; Austria, 2000 personnel; and Sweden, 1500 personnel. These contributions will not become official until after the Capabilities Commitment conference. "EU Defense Ministers Examine Joint Reaction Force Needs at Meeting in France," in FBIS-WEU-2000-0922, September 22, 2000.

states will make the difficult budgetary and procurement decisions that will transform these rhetorical commitments into operational reality.

### Promoting Efficiency in the European Defense Establishment

Promoting efficiency within the European defense establishment must lie at the core of any long-term effort to produce a freestanding, independent military capability, but this will be a massive undertaking. The obvious solutions have been tried. Europe is no stranger to multinational partnerships for the development of new weapons. The record is at best mixed, and often the unit costs for the resulting weapons seem steep for the capabilities delivered. For every successful effort like the Tornado aircraft, there are several examples of failure. The Europeans are exploring new models for international cooperation on support capabilities. In September 2000, the German and Dutch defense ministers agreed that the Netherlands would pay approximately \$80 million to Germany to offset the \$5.7 billion cost of Germany's 73 A400M transport aircraft. Many Europeans hailed this as an excellent model for future defense cooperation, but key questions are unresolved. The most pressing problem is creating some sort of mechanism through which the Netherlands would be able to use these airplanes, which will remain German national assets.<sup>22</sup>

For the newest capabilities where the technologies are often exotic and expensive, there is the serious problem of high entry costs for would-be participants. For example, if a country wants to acquire an aircraft carrier, it faces the extraordinary costs associated with developing the domestic capability to build one, or it builds the ship under contract with another country that can do the job, or it enters into partnership with countries that have already made the investment and want to build carriers. In the current era, the country most likely to have developed the technical capacities and to have paid the freight to develop expertise in advanced technology arenas is the United States. Moreover, as the U.S. General Accounting Office reported, current trends in European defense investment *lead away*

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<sup>22</sup>Brooks Tigner, "Europeans Eye Cross-Border Defense Subsidies," *Defense News*, October 16, 2000.

from research and development where new technical capabilities might be perfected. Indeed, as defense budgets continue to fall or their purchasing power is compromised by inflation, larger budget shares are consumed in operation and maintenance of current forces, leaving less for research, development, and test and evaluation.<sup>23</sup> These facts collectively suggest that Europe's ability to pay the entry fee into high-cost technologies and production capabilities will become increasingly questionable over the next decades unless governments intervene and amend their current investment policies.

### Encouraging Additional Investment in European Defense

Encouraging additional defense investments appears a gloomy prospect. The vast majority of NATO members have slashed their budgets since the end of the Cold War, and the trend lines show no sign of future increases.<sup>24</sup> As Table 4.2 illustrates, defense spending has steadily declined throughout the 1990s, and the mean investment in defense budgets within European NATO currently hovers around 2 percent of gross domestic product. Projections indicate that most of the European allies will maintain roughly constant defense budgets over the next few years,<sup>25</sup> but some states are contemplating significant reductions. In Germany, for example, the foreign minister has proposed a defense budget that will decline by DM80.3 billion by 2003, even though the Ministry of Defense estimates that the German military would need its budget *increased* by DM20 billion over the next ten years to meet operational requirements.<sup>26</sup> Some Europeans have proposed establishing common minimum levels of defense expenditures—French Minister of Defense Alain Richard has suggested that a reasonable figure would be 2 percent of GDP—but such increases in allied defense spending seem increasingly unlikely.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup>U.S. General Accounting Office, GAO/NSIAD-99-185, *NATO Implications of European Integration for Allies' Defense Spending*, Washington, DC, June 1999.

<sup>24</sup>This does not include the three new NATO members—the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland—which all increased their defense spending during the 1990s.

<sup>25</sup>U.S. General Accounting Office, GAO/NSIAD-99-185.

<sup>26</sup>"German Defense Report Previewed," in FBIS-WEU-1999-1007, October 7, 1999.

<sup>27</sup>Richard has also encouraged the Europeans to invest a minimum of 0.2 percent of GDP on military equipment. See "Paris, Bonn Considering Rearmament Due to



**Table 4.2**  
**Defense Spending as a Percentage of GNP, 1990–1999**

Country	1990	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Percentage Change, 1990–1999
Belgium	2.4	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	38.8
Canada	2.0	1.7	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.2	39.7
Denmark	2.0	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.6	19.0
France	3.6	3.3	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.8	21.4
Germany	2.8	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.5	45.1
Greece	4.7	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.8	4.9	5.3
Italy	2.2	2.0	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.0	7.4
Luxembourg	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	7.9
Netherlands	2.6	2.1	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.8	32.9
Norway	2.9	2.8	2.4	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.2	26.7
Portugal	2.7	2.5	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.2	19.0
Spain	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.4	26.3
Turkey	3.5	4.1	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.4	5.6	57.3
United Kingdom	4.0	3.3	3.0	3.0	2.7	2.7	2.6	36.0
United States	5.3	4.1	3.8	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.2	40.4

SOURCE: United States Department of Defense, *Report on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense*, March 2000.

The outlook in defense research and development is also cloudy at best, as noted in the preceding discussion of efficiency. The United States spends about \$35 billion annually, while the rest of NATO combined spends only \$9 billion—and the NATO statistic reflects a great deal of duplication of effort among the allies.

The recent adoption of a common European currency has reduced the European governments' fiscal flexibility. The Euro constrains national spending, because the plan for monetary union requires members to attain roughly balanced budgets in the next few years. These countries will also face major pressures from escalating entitlement costs. With relatively fixed budgets and increasing entitlement expenditures, defense budgets are often the only source of

Kosovo," in FBIS-WEU-1999-0619, June 19, 1999; "Richard Urges Increase in European Defense Budgets," in FBIS-WEU-1999-1202, December 2, 1999.

elasticity that governments can draw upon to help them satisfy the criteria for European monetary union.<sup>28</sup> As a result, defense budgets will likely continue to be eyed eagerly by other domestic claimants, and will suffer periodic reductions in the process.

## REVISING THE TEMPLATE FOR ALLIED OPERATIONS

The reigning NATO strategic concept, Kosovo's lessons, and today's limited prospects for more robust European defense budgets coalesce to suggest parameters for future allied military operations. They will in all likelihood be coalitions of the willing, involving NATO countries, others that are not formally allies, and occasionally countries from outside Europe.<sup>29</sup> The contributions of armed forces from individual participating states will probably be modest in size, although some will be significantly larger than others. The gap in military capabilities between the United States and the Europeans will endure and probably widen, despite the earnest efforts of many of the allies to acquire more capable forces and more effective weapons. The actual course of the operations themselves may reflect the gradualism and modest operations tempo that characterized Operations Deliberate Force and Allied Force. To be successful, future operations must be able to assign useful, effective tasks to all participants, operate within NATO's new strategic concept in demanding circumstances, and exploit the potential of the revitalized CJTF notion.

### Capability for Useful, Effective Tasks

Because most of the Europeans have chosen not to make substantial increases in their near-term defense spending, it is essential that the Alliance focus attention on directed investments that can yield the greatest dividends under the circumstances. The examination earlier in this chapter of the DCI suggested that deployability and sustain-

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<sup>28</sup>U.S. General Accounting Office, GAO/NSIAD-99-185.

<sup>29</sup>For example, SFOR contains national contingents of more than 100 troops from Albania, Finland, Morocco, New Zealand, Romania, Russia, and Sweden. KFOR is even more diverse, with national contingents of more than 100 troops from Argentina, Austria, Finland, Morocco, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, and Ukraine. See IISS, *Military Balance 2000-2001*, for more details.

ability should receive priority attention. Of course, the individual allies as part of their routine NATO planning have also embraced force goals that will lead them to buy new equipment and munitions. It is essential that NATO encourage its members to buy items of equipment and munitions that will make significant contributions regardless of the operations tempo. For air forces, this suggests investments that will let them fly in all weather, day and night; fight aerial engagements beyond visual range; and deliver precision-guided munitions. These are valuable capabilities for forces under all conditions, whether plinking at individual tanks to enforce a demilitarized zone, maintaining a no-fly zone, or executing massive, high-tempo air operations. Other high-value investments would include improved intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, and the ability to deliver information on the enemy's forces directly to the allied elements that will confront them.

### **Organizing the Means to Implement the NATO Strategic Concept**

Operating under the current strategic concept places a premium on being able to deploy forces away from home in conjunction with other countries quickly enough to interdict or preempt a growing crisis, and to sustain those forces in operations that will ultimately produce a settlement to the problem. The crisis reaction force model adopted by some of the allies seems the right approach. It is essential, however, that the allies configure their forces modularly for a smooth, consistent fit among national contingents, and that individual modules be tailored with a full suite of capabilities.

Squadrons for air forces and brigades for ground forces might be appropriate modules, at least to start. Modular squadrons might be either strike or support squadrons. Strike squadrons would be composed of air superiority fighters; reconnaissance, EW, and SEAD aircraft; and strike aircraft. Support squadrons would include transports, tankers, and airborne early warning and command and control aircraft. Ground-force brigades would include expanded logistics, supply, medical, and maintenance capabilities along with traditional artillery, engineer, and maneuver forces.

### **Revitalizing the CJTF Notion**

NATO has been developing the CJTF concept for several years. In the fall of 1993, the United States proposed the CJTF to satisfy European concerns about their lack of an independent defense capability while maintaining NATO as the principal European security institution. The basic principle of the CJTF is that NATO forces would be “separable but not separate” from the Alliance: members of the Western European Union would be able to use NATO military assets for their own operations, including logistics, transport, and support functions. The NATO ministers endorsed the CJTF concept during the 1994 summit meeting in Brussels, and approved it at the 1996 ministerial meeting in Berlin.<sup>30</sup>

The military aspects of the CJTF have been practiced regularly, through scheduled exercises (Strong Resolve '98) and deployments (IFOR, SFOR, and OAF are all CJTFs in practice if not in name). However, the Alliance has yet to agree on a mechanism for political oversight for CJTFs—the critical stumbling block.

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<sup>30</sup>For more on the CJTF, see Nora Bensahel, “Separable But Not Separate Forces: NATO’s Development of the Combined Joint Task Force,” *European Security*, Vol. 8, No. 2, Summer 1999, pp. 52–72.

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## CONCLUSIONS

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This assessment of Operation Allied Force leads to several sets of conclusions: those for the United States, those for the U.S. Air Force, those for the allies, and those for future coalitions.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES

Because the Europeans plan very modest steps to address the shortcomings found in Operation Allied Force and the United States will retain its commanding lead in military capabilities, it is likely that future coalition operations will remain much the same. European resentment over U.S. dominance may deepen, but the allies will find themselves at least as dependent upon the U.S. military as they were in the Kosovo crisis, if not more so.

Future U.S. military operations will most likely be conducted in conjunction with NATO allies or other coalition partners, because such operations provide greater political legitimacy. However, the United States must accept that the process of political consultation in such operations may lead to a limited military approach that is inconsistent with the U.S. military's preference for overwhelming force. Future coalitions will often include actors of widely varied military capabilities who share a limited consensus on the conduct of the operation at hand. The United States can pursue a number of steps to minimize the negative aspects of such coalitions and maximize their military potential.

### **1. Recognize the Leverage Available to U.S. Leadership**

Because the United States enjoys overwhelming military dominance over its allies, it has considerable leverage in designing military operations. The United States should consider whether it should use that leverage to forge a consensus for more vigorous military action—the use of overwhelming force—even at the cost of some allies' participation. Some future crises may be better resolved by solutions where the United States enlists only three or four allies who can support a vigorous campaign likely to produce decisive results. There will also probably be other times when the broadest consensus for action is more important. The point is that the United States should consider both options on a case-by-case basis.

### **2. Encourage Allied Capability Improvements**

The United States should press the allies to develop flexible, balanced, air-ground force packages and the means to deploy and sustain them beyond the immediate reach of their own depots and facilities at home. In practical terms, this means focusing within the Defense Capabilities Initiative on deployability and sustainability. It also means working with NATO to amend the normal force planning process so that target force goals associated with coalition crisis management operations such as Operation Allied Force will have priority over other, more routine improvements. Doing so will produce efficient forces that can obtain effective results even under conditions where NATO's warrant for action is closely constrained.

### **3. Support NATO Exercises and Training**

The United States should not only advocate an exercise calendar with enough events to engage the countries that are most promising as future coalition partners, but should also insist on scenarios that will require the participants to practice the political consultative and deliberative actions necessary to support their military participation in the operation. The United States should advocate exercises at least semiannually that would involve the North Atlantic Council principals and their deputies in consultations and coalition-building. The scenarios should be developed to exercise the individual member countries' internal decisionmaking apparatus as well, so that the

entire consultative and decisionmaking process is exercised fully. Such exercises should cost little; they would use established communications systems linking allied ministries of defense and foreign affairs and the various NATO headquarters. The field exercise component could be undertaken in any of the currently scheduled EUCOM or JCS exercises.

#### **4. Exploit Advanced Technologies**

The United States should take full advantage of U.S. exercise technologies—such as the “synthetic theater of war” advanced computer representation of military forces and the Joint Simulation System (JSIMS)—and incorporate them within NATO to enhance alliance training and exercises. JSIMS, for example has already made inroads within the U.S. modeling and simulation community in Europe. Extending it to the Alliance would be the logical next step. Doing so will make it easier to integrate command-post exercise activities with the actual maneuvers and operations of tactical forces. The synthetic theater of war environment will also help integrate the political, consultative aspects of coalition operations with their military, tactical aspects.

#### **5. Manage the Capabilities Gap**

If the United States expects to have militarily and politically significant support from its allies in future crises, Washington must find a way to manage its capabilities gap with other countries’ contingents. In air operations, managing the gap could mean developing CJTFs to include assigning or earmarking forces for specific, standing task forces. Under such an arrangement, the Europeans could contribute in those missions where they have good capabilities and the United States could provide support and specialty aircraft as operations require.

#### **6. Emphasize Multipurpose Assets**

The United States should advocate that allied air forces improve capabilities that will be useful across the spectrum of operations. Some military assets provide significant military advantages whether the

coalition is producing overwhelming force, flying hundreds of sorties per day, plinking at individual tanks, or flying only a handful of sorties per week. Such capabilities include onboard targeting pods for all-weather and night operations, reasonable inventories of modern precision-guided munitions, and secure voice and digital communications. By focusing on these types of assets, the European allies will maximize their ability to participate in a wide range of contingencies.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR THE U.S. AIR FORCE

The U.S. Air Force should expect to continue to play the role of allied force integrator and all that the role implies. Although this is not a new role for the Air Force, it is one that will probably recur with future coalition operations and is therefore worthy of continued attention. As the principal multinational force integrator, the Air Force must resolve the U.S.-only ATO issue while still protecting U.S. assets, and align coalition aircraft and ordnance with appropriate targets. Moreover, the Air Force must do so in a way consistent with the rules of engagement and without exposing the allies to conditions such as night or bad weather and threats they cannot reasonably manage.

The Air Force must be prepared to find appropriate roles for its less-capable coalition partners. Doing so will involve designing future operations in such a way that all of the coalition members can participate. The Air Force is accustomed to this function when dealing with its principal NATO allies: assigning combat air patrol missions to those with fighter aircraft, air defense suppression to those with antiradiation missiles, and fixed targets for attack by those with basic strike/attack capabilities. If future coalitions include other air forces—Croatian, Tunisian, or Moroccan, for example—finding appropriate tasks may be challenging.

Finally, the Air Force should reconcile itself to the fact that, if the National Command Authority continues to perceive great benefits from conducting military operations in coalitions, there will likely be times when political-military considerations will dominate professional military considerations in designing and executing prompt coalition military action. In these circumstances, the Air Force can only continue to carry out its operations vigorously and render the soundest professional military advice possible.



## **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE**

Individually and collectively, the allies have much to grapple with from Operation Allied Force. At least five major issues deserve their immediate attention.

### **1. Flexible Command Arrangements**

If, like OAF itself, future operations are undertaken by coalitions of the willing rather than by all the members of the Alliance, the Alliance should assure itself that it has command structures that are optimized for coalitions. No single coalition structure will be appropriate for all missions and environments. But regardless of their specific form, all coalition structures must provide, at a minimum, a basic framework for headquarters and their subordinate units, complete with communications architectures that will support the consultative, deliberative, and political aspects that often enjoy increased priority in these types of circumstances. The CJTF may be a model to start from, but it will surely require refinements and development to ensure the flexibility and adaptability necessary to overcome the uncertainties and idiosyncrasies likely to attend future operations. For the CJTF concept to be successful, NATO must find a way to exercise effective political control over CJTF operations while simultaneously maintaining their flexibility.

### **2. DCI Priorities**

The Alliance must continue to emphasize the DCI, but in a more focused way. Major additional defense spending among most of the allies is highly unlikely (and indeed, many allies may continue to reduce their defense budgets), so the force planning process must highlight those things that the Alliance really wants its members to accomplish. DCI-related investments, particularly in sustainability and deployability, must receive priority over routine force goals and their periodic improvements.

### 3. Expand NATO-Owned Assets

NATO should consider expanding its own, Alliance-owned assets beyond the current AWACS inventory to include ISR and EW capabilities, for at least four reasons.<sup>1</sup>

- Low-density, high-demand assets will be required across the spectrum of possible contingencies, because they are well suited to monitoring military activities and are an important component of peacetime stabilization missions. Having NATO possess some of these assets on its own will not only strengthen its capabilities, but could ultimately reduce some demands on the United States to provide scarce but essential aircraft and similar assets.
- Coalitions of the willing like Operation Allied Force may not always attract the most capable allies, and sometimes may involve Partnership for Peace states and others of widely varied military capabilities. Commonly owned NATO ISR/EW assets might be essential to support coalitions of the less capable or coalitions in which the U.S. role is reduced because of major contingencies elsewhere.
- Commonly owned NATO assets increase the likelihood of maintaining coalition cohesion. Once the NAC approves the overall operation, NATO's military authorities can employ these assets without having to convince individual allies to contribute their national assets.
- ISR/EW capabilities are expensive. Given the current constraints on European defense spending, it may make more sense to encourage the Europeans to pool their resources to support common NATO assets than to encourage each of them to develop national ISR/EW capabilities.

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<sup>1</sup>NATO is currently pursuing two initiatives in this area: the NATO Transatlantic Advanced Radar (NATAR) and Stand-Off Surveillance Targeting and Acquisition Radar (SOSTAR). Both are still in the early stages of development, but they may be steps in the right direction. See John D. Morrocco, "NATO Radar Project Aims to Boost Interoperability," *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, June 5, 2000, p. 87.

#### **4. Force Generation and Targeting**

The Alliance should consider a more responsive system for requesting forces and assets from its members. While the decision to contribute forces will always reside with the governments of the members individually and will usually require time for consultation and decisionmaking, the Alliance would nevertheless benefit from a faster, more flexible system that would process additional requirements as circumstances within a given operation change and demand different or additional resources. The Alliance would also benefit from a faster, more flexible system for making operational decisions such as targeting. How much more quickly individual actors can be prompted to act will depend on the circumstances of the crisis at hand, but NATO should invest in a communications system and exercise it regularly with the principal officials who must make the decisions so that the process works as quickly as possible.

#### **5. Common Alliance Doctrine**

A common approach to operations may be elusive in coalitions of the willing, but the Alliance should nevertheless investigate new ways to forge agreements on doctrine and military practices with political guidance from individual capitals in a way that will approximate a common operational approach. For air operations, a basic agreement on the relative importance of strategic and tactical targets should be possible. Among ground forces, a similar general consensus on crisis management and stability operations should lie within the allies' grasp. The process of establishing common Alliance doctrine (as in Allied joint publications) should continue, but more informal guidelines should be developed that do not require such a long, formalized review process.

#### **6. Consultation and Consensus**

The Alliance must perfect a process of consultations and deliberations among its members and institutionalize it. Just as NATO once regularly exercised its nuclear command and control procedures to include the political levels, today it should develop and exercise the consultative-deliberative and decisionmaking processes essential to mount and operate a coalition comprised of fewer than all the mem-

bers. Creative mechanisms must be found to maintain consensus within the Alliance, perhaps along the lines of the EU's new constructive abstention procedure.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN ALLIES**

In addition to the issues that confront the Alliance as a whole, Operation Allied Force has four specific implications for the European allies.

### **1. Fiscal Constraints and Modernization**

The Europeans must progress toward capable, deployable, and sustainable forces despite the budget limitations that constrain their options, or they will face eventual marginalization. They may, as Germany has recently done, opt for force reductions to finance modernization. Or they may prefer to divert funding toward certain key capabilities while living with shortcomings in less critical areas. In the long term, the Europeans may realize greater efficiencies within their defense industries, but for the near term, the only credible solution for producing increased military capabilities is to direct funding to the acquisition initiatives that will produce the desired capabilities.

### **2. Integrated Air-Ground Capabilities**

The Europeans must design and build complete, coherent, air-ground force packages. Pooling assets is an unreliable strategy for coalitions of the willing, so individual NATO states should strive to create balanced forces with a reasonably flexible range of capabilities suitable for employment in a wide range of circumstances. Building robust brigades capable of independent action for limited periods of time and multirole aircraft versatile enough to undertake many of the primary tactical air missions would be a step in the right direction, even if doing so cedes much of the strategic air campaign to the United States.

### 3. The DCI and the EU

The Europeans should use the ESDI to expand the pool of potential coalition partners by promoting DCI-like force attributes widely across the EU. It will be in NATO's interest to have still other potential partners available for coalitions of the willing—especially if the forces that join some future allied expedition share many of the same capabilities and operating traits. This will be particularly important as the EU considers its next round of expansion. While the EU is not likely to establish preconditions for membership based on specific military capabilities, it should use its accession negotiations to emphasize the importance of military programs that are consistent with DCI priorities. Future European military operations—whether conducted as a part of NATO or by an independent EU force—will require improvements in European deployability and sustainability.

### 4. Institutional Development of the ESDI

The Europeans should continue the institutional development of the ESDI in a way that ensures its complementarity with NATO. They should build on their rhetorical commitment to a European defense capability by creating the organizational structures necessary to command such an operational force. The ultimate success of the ESDI will depend just as much, if not more, on its institutional development than on its ability to achieve force goals. The EU's top priority should be to establish formal ties with NATO, to ensure that the two organizations remain complementary and do not become competitors. The EU made some progress towards this goal at the June 2000 European Council Meeting held in Feira. The EU heads of state approved a joint British-French proposal to create four ad hoc working groups, which would be charged with

- preparing an EU-NATO security agreement
- exchanging information on capability goals
- preparing an agreement that will give the EU access to NATO military assets

- defining a permanent relationship between the EU and NATO, including both formal structures and informal consultation procedures.<sup>2</sup>

These working groups are on the right track, in creating some formal consultations between the two organizations. However, the hard work remains ahead. NATO and the EU must still resolve some very difficult issues about their future military relationship.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE COALITIONS

Future coalitions may or may not be pure NATO affairs. Moreover, even when all the participants are also members of the Alliance, it may be that not all allies contribute to the military effort. These circumstances carry six implications for the Alliance.

### 1. Differing Capabilities

The coalition may contain widely different capabilities. Just as some of the combat air patrol sorties during OAF may have been flown because they represented the only tasks that some of the aircraft and air crews could perform, future coalitions may face similar considerations. The crucial consideration will be to design plans in such a way that units can be assigned within their capabilities to tasks that contribute to the ultimate objective of the operation. The coalition leadership may have to be innovative to find effective roles for all the participants, but the alternative is to see potentially useful assets sidetracked into activities that demonstrate coalition solidarity but accomplish little else.

### 2. Allies Opting Out

One characteristic of OAF that may be suggestive of future circumstances was the way that while all 19 allies supported the operation, only 13 participated in the air campaign itself. Future coalitions may

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<sup>2</sup>Presidency Report on Strengthening the Common European Security and Defense Policy, submitted as Annex I of the Presidency Conclusions, Santa Maria da Feira European Council, June 19, 20, 2000. See also Peggy Beauplet, "A Thorny Combination," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, May 31, 2000, p. 20.

find that some members participate in the humanitarian and peace-keeping phases of an operation, but refuse to take part in combat should it occur. The specifics could vary considerably, but future coalitions must be prepared for challenges in which some of their forces—perhaps a significant part—are not available for perhaps crucial activities. If the operation escalates, the coalition must do its best to ensure that the states that opt out of the new tasks do not restrict the range of options available to those states that are committed to the new tasks.

### **3. Political and Diplomatic Constraints**

The “strike-and-negotiate” strategy preferred by some of the members of OAF suggests that future coalitions may operate under conditions where the military instrument is deeply subordinated to other political-diplomatic efforts: conditions in which generating overwhelming force is impossible. In these circumstances, coalitions will have to be creative in finding ways to deliver useful military leverage in support of the political-diplomatic initiatives while operating within the limitations prescribed. Political disagreements among coalition members cause serious problems for military coalitions. At the outset of the operation, all coalition members must ensure that they share the same general goals and specific objectives. They must maintain constant dialogue throughout the operation to make sure that they maintain this agreement despite the fact that unforeseen circumstances will inevitably arise.

### **4. Limited Operational Goals**

A potentially serious consequence of coalition operations is that they may leave the enemy in power and in a position requiring further international supervision, such as enforcing no-fly zones. Many factors can contribute to this outcome. It may result from a fight-and-negotiate strategy, which requires the survival of the enemy regime to provide a negotiating partner. It can also result if the coalition cannot find a more attractive successor to deal with, leaving the enemy in place by default. Or the enemy may survive because the coalition defines success in ways that do not include more traditional military criteria like destruction of the enemy military force and collapse of the opposing regime. In any case, future coalitions should

be mindful that in the cases of Iraq, Bosnia, and Kosovo, the enemy regime endured and continued to cause trouble. Future coalitions should consider carefully the relative consequences of leaving the adversary intact or forcing him from power.

## **5. Coalition Lessons Learned**

Systematic efforts must be made to collect and disseminate lessons learned from coalition operations and respond to them. Most coalitions operate on an ad hoc basis, creating solutions to specific problems as they arise. Responding to lessons learned must therefore take place before the next crisis develops. Lessons learned must be collected, analyzed, and then distributed to future potential coalition members so that they do not repeat past mistakes and spend valuable time reinventing the wheel. The model here would be something like the Joint Universal Lessons Learned System (JULLS) in the United States. SHAPE would be a natural place to locate this center, since it can draw on NATO's operational history as well as its extensive series of PfP exercises. At first, this type of center will probably focus on issues related to technical interoperability, since countries will be reluctant to criticize each other's performance. But as trust builds over time, it should be able to increasingly include operational and strategic cooperation issues as well.

## **6. Multinational Exercises**

Multinational exercises are extremely important for ensuring interoperability with potential coalition partners and for working out potentially nettlesome command issues. NATO should improve its capability for exercises so that it can routinely integrate coalition building and maintenance activities with military actions. The Alliance should seek to develop its automated support to exercises, so that all elements necessary for successful coalition warfare can be linked and exercised together. The Alliance should involve the reaction force units most likely to lead future interventions in a vigorous field training schedule.



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**OPERATION ALLIED FORCE**, the 1999 NATO air campaign that sought to prevent a wider humanitarian disaster in Kosovo, represents the triumph of air power to some observers and highlights air power's limitations for others. This book, a dispassionate assessment of Operation Allied Force, provides perspectives from both sides of the Atlantic. The campaign highlighted the growing gap between U.S. military capabilities and those of Europe and the potential consequences of joining a limited-objective operation that expands to undesirable proportions. It also showed the absence of consensus both within the U.S. military and the Alliance on the best use of air power, the vulnerabilities of a military coalition engaged in an essentially humanitarian operation facing an adversary fighting for its survival, and the limitations inherent in the "fight-and-negotiate" strategy that left the unrepentant Milosevic in power.

The authors conclude that the European allies can expect continued emphasis on the Defense Capabilities Initiative, which stresses the need for all NATO forces to be interoperable, deployable, and sustainable. Europeans must reverse recent trends of defense reductions and invest more in order to realize major improvements in defense capabilities.

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